

HOW I FOUND MY MARIA.

BY N. P. DARLING.

My name is Smith—"one of the few immortal names that were not born to die"—Jabez Smith, and I am not a married man, though I expect to be one soon, very soon. My hair stands on end like the quills upon the fretful porcupine, when I think upon the doom that awaits me. It is hard, for one so young, so beautiful, and with such bright hopes as were mine only a few short hours ago, with the world all before me, as one might say, with the exception of what is behind me, to be thus doomed to drag out a weary existence as the husband of a woman I never saw but once, who is ten years my senior, and who has only one thing to recommend herself to my love—her name, which was Jones.

Now there is nothing in the simple name of Jones to cause a man's heart to palpitate, perhaps you think, my lovely reader. Under ordinary circumstances, I agree with you; but if for three long years (one was leap year) and more, you had loved with your whole heart a girl who bore the euphonious name of Jones; if for one thousand and ninety-six consecutive nights ("an unprecedented run") you had retired to your virtuous couch with the name of Jones upon your lips, and the fancied image of Maria Jones before your eyes, would it be strange if you came to love the name only less than its lovely owner? Would it be strange if the name of Jones, no matter where you saw it, should fix your attention? Would it be at all singular if you became intensely interested in everybody and everything belonging to the whole Jones family, or rather all the families and members of families who bear the name of Jones, not excepting the celebrated Davy, and his famous locker? I rather think not. This was the case with me. I was interested in everybody by the name of Jones; I loved the name, but alas! I loved Maria better.

Maria, the beautiful, the dark-haired, the hazel-eyed, the loveliest Jones of all the Joneses, O, where was she? "Ask of the winds that far around with fragments strewed the sea," as the late Mrs. Hemans replied when questioned as to the whereabouts of the boy who stood on the burning deck.

I don't think the above quotation quite appropriate, but it was the only thing I could think of, and I felt just as though I must quote something. My feelings have been so wrought upon in the last few hours, that nothing but mental pictures of those people who at some period of their lives found themselves in a worse situation than I am at present, afford me the slightest relief. It made me almost cheerful when I thought of young Cassablanca, for, although my situation is horrible to contemplate, his was certainly worse.

But to my story. I must tell it, for I can find relief no other way, and I have but a few minutes to do it in. The marriage ceremony is to take place at two o'clock this afternoon. The minister is engaged, and my particular friend William Williamson has just left me for the purpose of obtaining the marriage certificate. I am alone with my thoughts.

Where, O where is Maria? I know not, but ah! let me forget her. She can never be mine. It is three years now since these eyes of mine dwelt upon her beauteous countenance, since she told me that she loved me. During those long years I have been a wanderer in distant lands, with nothing but her dear letters and a comfortable salary to comfort me.

I made her acquaintance while I was principal of the P— High School. She was one of my pupils. When she graduated it was our idea to marry, and open an academy for young ladies and gentlemen, where we could instruct the young idea in the art of shooting on the most approved plan.

But before the arrival of the day that was to make us both supremely happy, I received such a very liberal offer from a Mr. Jordan, the father of one of my pupils, to become his son's tutor and travelling companion, while the lad made a tour through Europe, for the benefit of his health, which had become much impaired by study, that I thought, and Maria agreed with me, that it would be very foolish of me not to accept. And so, bidding adieu to the dear girl, who had wound herself like a corkscrew through the very core of my

heart, I kissed her upon both cheeks, and promising to be true to her, as well as to the rest of the Joneses, whom I loved sincerely for her sake, I tore myself away from her, and that very day, in company with my pupil, embarked in the Asia for Liverpool.

For three years, as I remarked before, I travelled or sojourned in Europe. We passed our first winter in Nice, which is a very nice place to spend a winter, though some crabbed people don't pronounce it so; the second in Venice, and the third in Paris; and although I saw many beautiful women, I am happy to state that the needle of my heart never for one instant "wobbled," but pointed steadily to the north star of my existence, Maria Jones.

Meantime that dear creature amused herself (she always was fond of amusements), by teaching school in the rural districts, and in writing to her dear Smithy, as she called me, and in reading the letters I sent her, containing glowing descriptions of the various countries, cities, peoples and incidents, that I visited and met with in my journey; and so the time passed.

At last, I stood once more upon the soil of my own native land. This interesting and rather difficult feat (for I have seen those who couldn't stand thus without help) I executed for the first time in three years, just one week ago to-day in the city of New York.

What my feelings were I shall not attempt to describe. It would take too long. It is enough to say that I was supremely happy in the thought that I was once more near my own Maria, and that in a few days, at most, I should press her beauteous form to my wildly throbbing heart.

With the utmost despatch I transacted what little business I had in the city, and then started for the village of M—, where I expected to find my Dulcinea. Alas! she had gone from there, no one knew whither. All that I could learn was, that her brother had returned from Australia, immensely rich, and that he was going to settle somewhere in his native country, and Maria was to live with him.

I believe that I have not told you that my love was an orphan. Knowing how tender-hearted you are, dear reader, I didn't want to harrow up your feelings, and I shouldn't have mentioned her fatherless and motherless condition even now, if I did not think it was positively necessary for you to know it. I loved her better on that account. You see I

had been in the habit of falling in love with young ladies that *had* fathers who had money, and the said fathers had been in the habit of declining my proposals, sometimes viciously, to speak mildly, until I retired at last in disgust and centered my affections upon the orphan Maria, congratulating myself that at last I had anchored in a port from which no cruel parent could drive me.

My love had a sister some years older than herself, whom I had never seen, and a brother in Australia, whom I had never called upon. But of course the former would not undertake to influence Maria in the choice of a husband, and as to the latter, I never expected to see him.

But here he had returned, with wealth, and his sister was under his charge. I knew not where to find them, and if I did, perhaps this brother would object to making over his sister into the hands of a poor tutor. Alas! was I always to be balked by crabbed fathers and wealthy brothers?

Hardly knowing which way to turn or what to do, I tarried in M— nearly a week, in a state of dreadful uncertainty. But in the meantime I wrote to my old friend William Williamson, informing him of my return to "my dear native land." His answer reached me before I had decided upon any particular plan of action. It contained an invitation for me to visit him immediately at his home in the town of Becklinburg, where he was keeping bachelor's hall, his family being away.

Without more ado, I immediately packed up, and started for Becklinburg, via. New York and New London per steamer.

The steamboat train, as it is called, reaches Becklinburg at about four o'clock in the morning; and at that hour of this very morning I found myself landed at a dark and dismal depot, from which I hurried out into the street, in search of my friend Williamson's house.

I have been here in Becklinburg many times before, and I am quite familiar with the streets of the town, or at least I was three years ago, and time has made but few changes. To be sure the town is larger, and quite a number of buildings have been erected in my absence, as I noticed this morning while walking through its deserted streets. I noticed in particular, that some one had built a house on the lot adjoining my friend Williamson's, and so much like his in every respect, that it would have been difficult for

a stranger to distinguish between them. However, I had visited the house too often to experience any difficulty on that score, or at least I thought so, for I pride myself a great deal upon the fact that I never forget a face that I have once seen, a road that I have once travelled, or a house whose threshold I have once crossed.

When I reached Williamson's gate I was undecided what course to pursue. It was really too bad to ring a man up at four o'clock in the morning, even if he was your friend, if I could effect an entrance without; and I knew I could, as I had done it many a time before, in company with Williamson, when we were boys, and slightly wild, perhaps.

Around the house ran a veranda, the top of which was easily reached by some trellis work at the side and from there I could step into one of the chamber windows without troubling any one. This I resolved to do.

I succeeded in climbing to the roof of the veranda without any serious difficulty, and with but little noise, and then a few cautious steps brought me to the window of Williamson's room, which I raised noiselessly and entered, not without some trepidation, although as I knew my friend had never been in the habit of keeping firearms about him, the danger, even if he should awaken, was slight.

Once in the room I paused to listen, for it was so dark that I could make nothing out but the dim outlines of the bed and furniture. I believe I trembled slightly, but the regular breathing of the occupant of the bed reassured me, and so cautiously closing the window I advanced into the room.

Still Williamson slept. Peering through the darkness, I could discover his form lying very near the edge of the bed, having plenty of room for me to slip in on the other side without disturbing him, or at least I thought so, remembering that he was a heavy sleeper.

It was with a chuckle of satisfaction and delight that I threw off my clothes, thinking meanwhile what would be the surprise of Williamson when he awoke in the morning to find his old friend Smith comfortably reposing beside him. I could hardly restrain myself from laughing outright, as my fancy pictured to me the sleeper's wonderment and perhaps alarm, or that which would be his, to find a bedfellow. Would he take me for the ghost of Smith, and run screaming away, or—just at this moment the sleeper turned over, and I became quiet as a mouse, hardly

daring to breathe; but he did not awake, and I, having completed my preparations, crept softly toward the bed, cautiously turned back the sheet, and slipped in.

Egad! how the bedstead creaked. Williamson flopped over, but he did not wake. He moaned musically, and then he muttered "Smithy," and I knew he was dreaming of me.

My grandmother used to tell me that if you pinch a sleeping person's toe he will answer any question you may ask. I had never tried it; but here was certainly an excellent opportunity. I began to search for Williamson's toe, but *very* carefully. Slowly I slipped my hand beneath the sheets, slowly I—

"What the—Moses!"

"Murder! Help! help! help!"

It wasn't Williamson!

I sprang out on the front side, and the other party sprang out on the back side of the bed, yelling murder, and crying for help at the top of her voice (it was a female voice, or the voice of a female), while I stood shivering with the cold, and trembling with fear, endeavoring to persuade the lady to "hush up," declaring that I was a gentleman of honor, and that it was all a mistake, and that what wasn't right then we'd make right in the morning, but I really don't believe she heard a word that I said; and just as the lady became exhausted with screaming, and might have been persuaded to listen to reason, I heard footsteps outside the door.

There is nothing like presence of mind in a case like this. Some people wouldn't have known what to do at this juncture. I did. With the greatest presence of mind I seized my pantaloons, and jumping into them (I never had a pair go on with more ease), I very coolly made a dash at the window, dashed through it, of course dashing it all to "smithereens," and landed myself handsomely on the roof of the veranda, my face, hands and legs beautifully ornamented with "cuts;" but I did not stop to admire these, but with the greatest celerity I made my way down the trellis work to the ground, followed by cries of "robbers!" "thieves!" etc., from my unknown bedfellow, and a fat, puffy gentleman in a red nightcap who had popped himself out of the window with a lamp in one hand and a "seven-shooter" in the other, who began to "let it off" just as soon as I disappeared from his view.

"Bang, bang, bang!" He discharged every barrel, but fortunately he was a poor shot at

long range. He missed me, but awakened all his neighbors. Lights flashed up in the houses on both sides of the street. Windows flew up and nightcaps popped out to see what was the matter.

Fortunately for me, at this moment I saw a face appear at a window in the next house, that seemed familiar. It was Williamson. I sprang forward, and leaping the garden wall called to him to come down.

"Who is it?" cried he.

"Smith—Jabez Smith," I replied, as softly as I could.

"Where'd you come from at this time, and in such a plight, Smith?"

"Don't stop to ask questions now, but come down and let me in."

"Go around to the door then."

I did so, and was admitted. Williamson closed the door behind me, staring at me in the greatest astonishment.

"What in thunder does this mean, Smith?" he cried, grasping my hand, "your face and hands are covered with blood, and—ha, ha, ha—where are your pantaloons?"

I looked down. Egad, I had jumped into the unknown's balmoral skirt!

"Where have you been?"

"I've been roaming, I've been roaming, my dear boy, and I lost my reckoning, and slipped into bed with a female in the next house, thinking it was you; and I dashed myself through a window; and I've been shot at, and if we can't hush this matter up, I'm ruined. Hide me, William, hide me, from the terrible man next door."

Williamson pulled me into the parlor, and throwing himself on the sofa roared with laughter.

"Don't laugh, or you'll betray me. Bless me, there's the doorbell!"

"Hush! keep quiet. Wait here and I'll go and see what is wanted," said Williamson, beginning to be alarmed.

"Don't betray me—don't."

He took the lamp, and closing the door after him, left me alone.

It was a moment of terrible suspense for me. If I had been seen to enter Williamson's house, if they searched and found me there, what would be the consequences? I dared not think. I had been guilty of something worse than burglary, and although I might be able to prove that I was innocent of any bad intentions, still my situation was dreadful to contemplate. At this moment I heard a strange voice at the hall door.

"But I tell you I saw him enter this house, Mr. Williamson," cried the voice, in a tone that assured me that the speaker was terribly in earnest; "and although I have not a search warrant, unless you mean to harbor a thief, you certainly can have no objections to my satisfying myself that he is not here."

"But he certainly wasn't a thief," said my friend.

"How do you know that, Mr. Williamson?" My friend was nonplussed.

"Come," said he, "come in, and I will explain it all."

"You explain it! What, are you the man?"

"No, but it was a friend of mine. Close the door, and let us keep this matter entirely to ourselves."

"Certainly, if your friend is an honorable man, and is willing to do the right thing."

"But it was a mistake, you see."

"Yes, and a very bad one, Mr. Williamson, and if men will make blunders they must pay for them."

"But my friend mistook the house. He thought it was my room that he was entering, and he thought it was I in the bed."

"But it was my sister."

"Well, there was no harm in that."

"How the deuce do I know, Mr. Williamson? I merely know the facts in the case, just as I have stated them, and I am bound to have satisfaction of your friend. He must marry the lady, even if she is compelled to sue for a divorce the next day after."

"And lose my Maria!" I yelled, forgetting in the agony of that thought the necessity for silence.

"Ha! that's him," cried the fat gentleman, rushing into the room, followed by a long, thin, peaked-nosed, peaked-chinned lady of thirty-five, perhaps, whose face was the color of tan bark, and whose eyes were as red as a soldier's button-hole.

"O, ho, Mr. What's-your-name," cried the tan-colored lady, springing forward, and clutching my hair, "aren't you ashamed of yourself, sir?"

"Danged if I aint," I answered, trying to sink into my balmoral.

"And what are you going to do about it, sir? Just tell me that, will you?" inquired the fat gentleman, grasping me by the arm. "Didn't you know that it was a high crime and a misdemeanor, for which you might be impeached, sir? Didn't you know that you might be lynched, sir, and don't you think

you deserve to be lynched, sir, for attempting to sleep with my sister contrary to the laws of the Commonwealth, and against the peace and dignity of the State?"

Looking at the tan-colored sister, I could but answer in the affirmative.

"And now what do you propose to do about it?" cried the fat gentleman.

"Why," said I, "I'm very sorry, sir; and for you, madam, I beg your pardon. It was all a mistake, I assure you, and my friend Williamson will tell you so."

"Quite likely, sir; but suppose such miserable mistakes should become common? They must be nipped in the bud, sir, nipped in the bud," and the fat gentleman looked exceedingly fierce. "To come to the point, you must either marry my sister, or—"

"What?" I gasped, fixing my eyes upon the countenance of the tan-colored female, who gave me an amorous glance at this point.

"Marry my sister, or I'll shoot you like a dog.

"Choose," cried the tan-colored one.

"And quick, too," yelled the fat one, growing excited.

"I'll marry her," I faltered.

"When?" inquired the lady.

"Name the day yourself. The sooner the better."

"This afternoon, then, at two o'clock."

"And meantime you will remain a prisoner in one of the chambers," said the fat gentleman, "and your friend must have no intercourse with you."

"I submit."

"Very good," said the fat gentleman; "and now follow me."

He led me to this room, brought my clothes, and locked me in. I have taken a bath since, and am now dressed ready for the execution—or the marriage ceremony, rather. Shall I ever survive it?

—"Hold heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up."

I hear a footstep at the door. My time is almost come. The fat gentleman enters, Adieu, my own beloved Maria, adieu!

Three o'clock, P. M. The ceremony is concluded, and I still live. Truly

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."

The fat gentleman conveyed me to his house, where I found his sister, arrayed in her best the minister, and Williamson waiting for us.

I was introduced to the minister, and then Williamson asked me if I was all ready, and I answered that I was.

"You can take your places then," said the minister.

"Place me on the trap, and draw the cap over my eyes."

"The lady isn't here," said Williamson.

"Yes, I am," answered a voice from the door.

I sprang forward, almost crazy with astonishment and delight.

"That voice!" I cried, "that form, those eyes, them nose! It is, it is my own, my darling Maria!"

"You bet!" she exclaimed, throwing herself into my arms.

We kissed.

"And this is your brother from Australia?" I asked.

"Yes, love. And this is my sister; but you are not going to marry her. We found out who you were, by some of my letters which I found in your coat, after your abrupt departure this morning from my room."

"Then it was your room that I entered—not your sister's?"

"Exactly. But don't make such a mistake again, my dear."

"Wont I, though?"

Then we took our places, and the minister made us one flesh.

And this is a true account of how and where I found my Maria.



\$10,000.--HOW MR. RAND SAVED IT.

JAMES FRANKLIN FITTS

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BY JAMES FRANKLIN FITTS.

My little story (began Mr. Rand) will illustrate the imprudence, not to say folly, with which men will often act when under the influence of some great controlling passion, such as the expectation of great gain. And it will also illustrate how men may redeem themselves from the consequences of such imprudence or folly by prompt and decided action.

The facts bring me back no great distance in my experience; only to the spring of 1865.

The great Pennsylvania oil fever was then at its height; fabulous stories were told and printed of men realizing hundreds of thousands in a day by the simplest speculation in lands, and many of my friends around me were converting their business into cash, and departing for the theatre of financial excitement. The fever soon overtook me, and I yielded to it. I was at the time the senior of two partners in a large and flourishing country retail store; I was prospering, and had

just arrived at the point where I could begin to lay up money. I was thirty-five years old, with a dear good wife and two little children, whom I loved, as I still do, better than myself. My home was to me the most beautiful and attractive spot on earth, and a month before I had determined to go to the oil-regions, I could not have been persuaded that anything on earth in the shape of temptation could win me away from it. But in this case the tempter attacked me at the weakest point. "Go now," my fancy whispered to me, "while there is a chance; this golden harvest will not last long. Venture boldly; put in a few thousands and make a cool half million; it has been done more than once, and you are quite as likely as any one to do it again. When you have done this, your family as well as yourself will be above all the chances and risks of trade, independent for life. It is your highest duty to go."

I prevailed upon myself to think that this was so. I broached my plan to my wife and several of my best friends; they all opposed it. They reasoned that it was better for me to stay here, with a certainty of fair profits, than to go into oil speculation and risk all that I had. Very true in the abstract, I allowed; but I had got myself to thinking that I could not fail. No wild, crazy gambler or speculator ever expects to lose his money; they are continually hoping for good luck, and the hope amounts to an expectation. So with me. My interest in the business was worth fifteen thousand dollars easily; on a hurried sale it brought twelve, and in order to realize the cash in hand, I was compelled to reduce it to ten. These figures will show how insane upon the subject I had become; and yet, my condition was no worse than that of hundreds of others.

With a sad but hopeful farewell to my family and friends, I was off for the oil-regions. I had to pass through Buffalo on my way, and there I stopped over one train, to get my draft for ten thousand dollars exchanged for a bank certificate of deposit for the same amount. Then, with the certificate safely stowed away in the leather bill-book which I always carried in my inner breast-pocket, I went on to Venango.

I arrived at one of the new oil-settlements in the evening; and after camping down all night on the floor of a shanty, for lack of better accommodations, I sallied out the next morning on a prospecting tour. Whichever way my steps turned I saw a crowd, a tumult

of anxious, eager men like myself, hurrying about or gathered around some well where was flowing the precious green fluid. Nothing was talked of or thought of but oil, and everybody seemed watching for promising speculations. I went about all the day, observing the ways of the place, and toward night I turned my steps back to the shanty. Before I had reached it, my attention was attracted to a group of men who stood a few rods from the path, and I went out of my way to join them. I found that they were standing about the machinery of a new well, which was pumping a steady stream into a vat.

"Fifty barrels to-day!" exultingly exclaimed a dapper little fellow, with a huge mustache and an unmistakable city cut to his clothes. He was standing on the platform of the derrick, above the crowd, as he spoke, and seemed to be expatiating upon the well. "Fifty barrels since sunrise! Not a flowing well, to be sure; but the pump brings up the oil in a steady stream, and it's my opinion that it'll last as long as any well on the ground."

"It's doing splendidly," said another man; a tall dashing fellow, who was emphatically puffing a cigar.

"Them's the two owners of it," said a man at my elbow.

"Good for them," another remarked. "Their fortunes are as good as made."

I lingered around the place, listening to other observations that were made upon the well and its lucky owners, and finally returned to the shanty and lay down on my hard bed with a feeling that was something like envy. I dreamed all night of oil-wells, and awoke in the morning with a resolution that I would own an interest in one of them before dark.

As I passed the spot where I had stopped the night before, on my way along the productive lands, I walked over to the well again. The pumping was going on as before, and the oil came out in great streams into the tank. I watched it for a few moments, with that kind of fascination which the victims of the oil-mania generally felt, and was turning away with a sigh, when my shoulder was tapped by one of the proprietors, the little fellow who had talked so glibly the night before.

"A pretty good well, sir," he said. "I don't see any reason why it won't pump like this for years."

"I should be satisfied with it if I owned it," I said.

"Wouldn't you like to purchase a share of it?" he asked, rather coaxingly.

I looked at his face, with the thought that he was quizzing me; but he appeared to be perfectly serious. Seeing that I was in doubt as to his meaning, he pointed to a printed bill posted on the derrick, which I had not before seen, although it was in staring capitals. Without giving the exact contents of it, it will be sufficient to say that it offered for sale the one-half interest in this well for ten thousand dollars; the offer to stand for one week only.

"Are you in earnest about this?" I asked, feeling somewhat startled, and somewhat as if my chance had come.

"Perfectly in earnest, I'm sorry to say," he replied. "I've tried hard enough to avoid it, but I'm driven to it. It is my half that is offered, and offered for only a trifle over what I have expended here. In a few weeks more I could easily realize ten thousand dollars out of this oil; but I can't wait. My house and lot in Buffalo are to be sold on a mortgage in one week from to-day, and I can't bear to have them sacrificed, as I know they will be. The property is worth more than the sum I offer to sell out here for; but if I am not there it may sell for one-half of it. So you see I must sell this interest. It grinds me to do it, but for reasons that I can't speak of to a stranger; it is better, on the whole, for me to lose the fortune that is pouring out of this well than my homestead."

"Your partner might bring you out," I suggested.

"And glad enough would I be to do it," spoke up the tall man, coming just in time to hear my remark, "if I had the means. But I haven't. Like poor Fred, here, I've spent my last dollar in putting down this well and getting the machinery to run it. If it wasn't for the good prospect ahead, I believe my boarding-house keeper would have turned me out two weeks ago. But I'm better off than my partner; I've only to hold on and gather the gold that's coming in, while he must sell."

My mind was half made. I walked up to the spot where the oil was gushing out of the pipe at every stroke of the pump, and looked at it as if it were already my own. A small crowd had again gathered about, and such exclamations as "great thing," "lucky fellows," "here's a fortune, sure," greeted my ears.

"Do you think of purchasing about here?" one of the owners asked, following me up. I answered in the affirmative.

"Then here's your chance, sure as you're a living man!" the other enthusiastically cried. "I tell you, sir, there's no mistake about it—this is one of the most promising places on the creek, and you can pump out an independent fortune here in a few months. If I had the money, I'd not hesitate a minute; and as I haven't, all my interest in the sale is to help poor Fred out of his trouble. I rather like your looks, too, and I'd prefer you for a partner than some others who have been here looking at the well. If you've got the cash," and he looked hard at me, "you'd better buy."

"I have got the cash," I replied.

"Good! You're just the man for Fred; and if you take his offer it'll be like giving you fifty thousand dollars. Come up to the office, and let us talk it over; there are too many people about here."

I walked with them to the shanty that they occupied, and went in with them, almost persuaded at that moment to make the investment. Everything seemed straight and honest about the matter; I had seen the well and the oil, and there was no chance for deception about that, and the man's reasons for selling were perfectly satisfactory. In fact, I believe I began to have some pity for him on account of the hardship of the case, and to wish that I had a thousand or two more than he asked, to offer him. And then the fact that the other partner—Dick was the name that he answered to—was to remain and work his interest, was the best kind of a guarantee of good faith.

If I had any lingering doubts or fears on the subject when I entered the office, they shortly dispelled them. We sat down around the rough pine-table, littered over with papers. Fred produced a bottle of wine, Dick some excellent cigars, and they proceeded to entertain me. But no one need imagine that I became intoxicated; the wine was a light sparkling kind that merely exhilarated, and when we had finished it we sat and smoked, while Fred's tongue ran on describing the profitableness of the investment with all the glibness of a Bowery Cheap John. I was satisfied before he had talked ten minutes. In ten more I threw away the stump of my

"Show me your title," I said. "Satisfy me about your rights here, and I'll buy the one-half interest at the terms you offer."

They immediately produced a lease of the premises for one hundred years, which I examined, and which was undoubtedly correct. I had seen other leases made by the same proprietor, and I knew the signature.

"I don't mind telling you what that cost us," said Fred, with a laugh. "Just twenty-five dollars! We took it when there had been no oil found within half a mile of here, and got it cheap enough, as things have happened."

He asked my name, and in half a minute he had filled up a blank assignment on the back of the paper, and signed it, transferring to me his one-half interest in the well and lands for ten thousand dollars. He held it so I could read it, and I saw that it was sufficient. I took out my bill-book and produced the certificate.

"This is payable to my order," I said. "I don't know how you're to get the money. Who'll identify you?"

"Let me see," said Fred, and I laid the certificate on the table. "O, that's all right!" he exclaimed, as he read it. "I know the officers of that bank, and they'll pay me on your indorsement."

The other partner—my future partner—the tall dashing fellow, came and leaned over Fred's shoulder, and looked at the certificate. As he bent his face lower, I saw a most rasically sinister smile diffuse itself over the whole countenance, and my ear caught a word whispered with significant emphasis:

"Sold!"

Somehow, just at that momentous instant, I could not fix my thoughts on oil, and money-making, and the business before us at all. I thought of Emily and the children at home, and wondered whether it was better for them that I should part with this money so easily. I looked at the two men, with their flashy finger-rings and breastpins, and I did not feel half as much like making the bargain as I had a moment before.

"Just indorse it to me—Fred Brown."

His voice startled me from my abstraction; I looked up and saw that he had placed the certificate on the table with his finger upon it, and was holding out a pen to me.

"I've written the indorsement—Pay to the order of Fred Brown," he said. "Just put your name under that. But Lord bless you, man—what's the matter? Your face is white, almost. You aint going crazy with your good luck, are you?"

They both laughed at this sally.

"No," I said, carelessly. "Just let me look at the face of that certificate again—so!" and with the words I slipped it from under his finger. My bill-book lay on the table; I quickly placed the certificate in it, folded it, and buttoned it up close again in my pocket.

The men fell back in blank astonishment, and both spoke together:

"What's that for?"

"What the devil d'ye mean, sir?"

"I've thought better of it," was my reply. "I've concluded not to buy. You may keep your assignment, or give it to some one else. The well may be a splendid investment—but I think, on the whole, I'll not take any stock in it."

They saw that I was in earnest, and two angrier men I never saw in my life. Fred—if that was his name—stood glaring at me with the expression of a hungry hyena balked of his prey; and Dick, the one who had avowed that he had no interest in the sale except to help his friend, came close up to me and shook his fist in my face.

"You can't come that game on us, my fine fellow!" he growled. "This trade is all done, and that paper is ours. Hand it over, or you'll smell these."

He shook his fist again. Now their conduct confirmed my suspicions. I was so rejoiced at my escape that I believe I could have engaged both of them in a fist-fight, if necessary. But there was no occasion for it.

"Lock the door, Fred," said the fellow who was menacing me. "We'll see about this here chap, pretty quick."

"Stop there!" I cried, producing a revolver, and cocking it, as Fred started for the door. "Lock that door, and I'll blow you through!"

He did stop, very suddenly. My attitude and weapon were what they had not expected.

"I believe you are two great scoundrels," I said. "Thank Heaven I have done nothing here yet to bind myself to you in any way; and I certainly shall not now." I arose to my feet, with the pistol in my hand. "Now, I am going to leave this shanty, and if any one offers to prevent me, it will be the worse for him. Look out there!"

Not a hand was raised; no violence whatever was offered. They stood quietly aside while I walked out; and I did not put up my pistol until I had put a safe distance between myself and them.

I went straight down to the well, and found a great commotion in the crowd gathered there. The pump was still working, but the

oil had stopped running. By this time I was pretty well excited; and mounting the platform, I secured the attention of the crowd, and gave them a brief account of my experience with the proprietors of this well. They listened with manifestations of anger, and when I had done, a dozen voices rose at once.

"Those fellows owe me more'n five hundred dollars, for work," one cried.

"And me two hundred for board."

"And me fifty for hoss hire," etc., etc., etc.

"Let's find the d—d rascals," some one suggested; and a rush was instantly made for the shanty. They were ten minutes too late; both the men had gone, leaving behind them the evidences of a precipitate flight. It was well for them that they were not found; their swindled creditors were angry enough to soak them in their own vat.

Some of these creditors attached the property that afternoon, and then the whole swindle was exposed. The man in charge of the well was one of the victims, and he did not hesitate to expose the fraud. As it now appeared, the well had not been put down more than thirty feet, and, of course, not a drop of oil had been reached. Four barrels of oil had been purchased, and brought on the ground in the night, and this was actually kept running through the pipe out of the spout, and back again from the barrel, by means of concealed pipes. Of course, the humbug was in hourly danger of detection, as the crowd was increasing and becoming more curious; and hence the haste of the two sharpers in pressing the negotiation.

I remained in this vicinity less than twenty-four hours after that. I began to see that I was hardly keen enough to cope with the rascals of the place, who were looking for just such men as myself. Perhaps I might have made a fortune if I had staid; but I did not feel like trying. Of course, I knew that such adventures as these were in a large minority; but I began to be sick of the place, and thought it best to retire with my money in my own pocket, while I could. I surprised and gratified my friends by my early return, and went back into business with the unpleasant thought that I had sacrificed about five thousand dollars in my haste to try the experiment of oil-speculation. Never mind; I have more than got it back again, and with it an experience which will, I trust, keep me clear of all such dangers in the future.

There is a brief sequel to this true story, that ought to be told. I visited Auburn State Prison, less than a year ago, and saw the convicts at work, clad in their parti-colored suits. One of them glanced up as we passed, and instantly dropped his eyes again. That glance was enough; spite of his close-cropped head and his showy costume, I recognized the person who has figured in these pages by the name of Dick. The warden told me that he was in for ten years, for forgery. Mr. Fred I have not heard from, but if he is not in that penitentiary he is in some other—or will be. And I don't think it wrong in me to hope that in their cases the governor will exercise the pardoning power very discreetly!

HOW WE REFUSED DUTY.

BY W. H. MACY.

"**MAN** the windlass!" was the order from our first officer, Mr. Scott, issued to us, the crew of the good ship Corsica, lying at single anchor in Kitty Harbor, at the island of Ponapi, or, as it is often called, Ascension.

Instead of prompt obedience to the command, as he evidently expected, there were indications of a desire to argue the point. Men, who had usually been foremost, now fell back on the bows, away forward of the windlass, and looked at each other in silence, or, in one or two instances, exchanged whispered words as well as glances.

"Did you hear the word there? *Man the windlass!*" he repeated, in a louder and still more authoritative tone.

"Go ahead, Wilson! You're spokesman," said two or three encouraging voices.

And Wilson took a step in advance of his shipmates, and said, respectfully, "Mr. Scott, we would like to see the captain before we take the anchor."

But the mate was not one to temporize, or to be made a fool of. He brought matters to a crisis at once.

"The captain is below now, and my orders are to man the windlass and get the ship underway. What I want to know is, are you going to obey the order?"

"No sir, not until we have seen Captain Hazard."

Without further parley, Mr. Scott turned on his heel and hurried aft.

"We've put a foot in it now, boys," said Wilson, "and we must wade through."

"All right; we'll hang together," was the reply from half a dozen at once.

"If the old man wants to take his anchor, let him *take* it," said one.

"Ay, let's see how he'll manage it without our help," said another.

"If you was all o' my mind, lads, you'd never do another hand's turn in the bloody hooker!" added Jack Collins, whom everybody knew to be the greatest blower, and, as a matter of course, the greatest coward in the forecabin.

Meanwhile, our executive officer hastened aft to the cabin gangway, and leaning over it, reported, "Captain Hazard, the crew have refused duty."

Up came the captain, cool and self-possessed—one of those resolute men who will

go through fire and water to carry their point. The "cruisers" had never seen him tried in an emergency; but we who had been longest on board the *Corsica*, best knew that our commander was not a man to be trifled with.

He confronted us with no outward sign of any disturbance of mind.

"What's the matter, men? What have you refused duty for?"

"If you please, sir, we want more liberty," answered Wilson.

"More liberty? Why, haven't you had three days apiece each watch? What more do you expect?"

"Yes sir; but, you see, we think we ought to lie in port longer. Here we've been out a long six months' cruise, on Japan, and now only nine days in harbor. These other ships were here when we came in, and are going to make a still longer stay of it. Besides, sir, you know that we can't get much in the way of recruits here to carry to sea with us; and we have thought that it was no more'n right that we should have a longer run ashore, to make up for it."

Captain Hazard seemed somewhat struck with the force of Wilson's statement, and for a moment appeared to hesitate. Some of the crew—those who didn't know him thoroughly—thought we were going to carry our point without further trouble.

"Men!"—he spoke firmly, and with the air of having made up his mind as to the course to be pursued—"I have heard all you have to say. The ship has been at anchor in this bay as long as I think it is proper or necessary, and *she's going to sea to-day, if she'll float!* I shall now give you ten minutes to do one of two things—either to go to the windlass or to go below."

And he, as well as all his officers, went aft to await our movements; the two ends of the ship arrayed against each other. On one side, overwhelming numbers, on the other, authority, the prestige of command, and the influence—powerful it is, too—of that habit of discipline which becomes a part of the very nature of the soldier and the seaman.

But it would never do, said the master-spirits among us, to back down now. The captain had disclosed his determination to take the ship to sea that morning; very well let him do it, if he could. It would be something gained if we could compel

him to do it without our assistance. It was certain that the "afterguard," unaided, could never weigh the anchor; he must either obtain help from our consorts, the two other whalers, or else slip his cable, and leave the anchor behind.

But had we really any ground for the insubordination we had shown, the reader may ask? I am bound to answer, if I can, because I am, in very truth, *telling* a story, and not *making* one. Boy as I was at the time, I thought we were entirely in the right; looking back at this distance of elapsed time, my views are very much modified.

Revolts and mutinies on shipboard are seldom the result of a sudden impulse. In almost all instances, the causes may be traced back through a considerable space of time. A hundred little matters, each trifling in itself, but each adding to the cumulative dissatisfaction, until the burden needs but the additional feather to break the backbone of endurance. There was much in Captain Hazard's conduct towards his crew which was not what it should be; though he was, in no sense, what is commonly known as a Tartar. His worst failing was in the matter of feeding us; he being an owner in the ship himself, and if not downright mean in this respect, he was decidedly "near," as Peggotty would say.

This matter of short commons is one which has a great weight with seamen, and is a most fruitful source of discontent, as well it may be. On the other hand, liberality in this direction, like charity in the Scripture, covereth a multitude of sins; and many a brutal captain has made friends of his subordinates by giving them duff three or four times a week. Jack is soft-hearted, where an appeal is made to his stomach, and is quite prone to sell his birthright for pottage. But I can honestly say that no attempt had ever been made to bribe the *Corsica's* crew by overfeeding them.

Our stays in port, as had been represented to the captain by our spokesman, had been very short. This, however, is but a comparative term; and looking back now, I incline to the belief that they had been quite as long as was really necessary. The business of our voyage was to be prosecuted on the ocean, and in carrying out his contract with his employers, Captain Haz-

and was, in the full sense of the word, a "driver." Indeed, were I an owner, fitting out a ship, I should, beyond doubt, seek just such a man to conduct the voyage; but were I going to ship, in a subordinate position, should look further before signing my name. I have sailed with much worse men than our captain in the course of my own experience—and with better.

I had fallen in with the current of disaffection, as might naturally be expected. For how could a mere boy like me do otherwise, without acting what I then, as well as all my fore-castle comrades, would have called the part of a "sneaking traitor?" I was in the position of a conservative Southerner of '61, struggling in the great vortex of secession.

Before the ten minutes were up we had, one after another, passed below into the fore-castle, and left the officers, with the boat-steerers and steward, to do what they could with the ship. As the last man descended, the flag went up and down at our mizzen-peak to attract the attention of our consorts, and the hail of our captain through his speaking trumpet, for Captain Merritt of the Mohegan to come on board in his boat, looked ominous for our chances of a longer stay at Ponapi. A boat's crew from her, and another from the English barque, the Stromness, would be ample force to purchase the anchor. We certainly could not prevent their doing it, if they saw fit; at least, not without a display of open violence, to which we were by no means prepared to resort, and in which, had we resorted to it, we should as certainly have come off second best.

"They won't come to take our anchor," said one of the men. "They told me they wouldn't—five or six of the Mohegan's fellows."

"Not *they!*" blustered Jack Collins; "I'll answer for them chaps aboard the 'lime-juicer,' anyway. They knocked off duty themselves here in this same bay last year; and carried their p'int, too."

"This thing was well known beforehand to the crews of both those ships," said Wilson, "and they have all, so far as I know, encouraged us to go ahead, and they would stand by us in putting it through. I can't believe they will be traitors enough to come aboard now and take our anchor."

"I don't know about that," said Bill

Owen, a cautious and shrewd man, better known by his *soubriquet* of "Steady Owen." Bill was one of the conservatives, and had all along had grave doubts of the policy of our course; but had been overruled by the majority, and found the only alternative was acquiescence, or downright "treason," which would send him to Coventry for the residue of the voyage, so far as his standing and influence among his shipmates were concerned.

"I don't know about that," he repeated again. "There's a vast difference between knocking off duty to carry a point of their own, and doing the same thing just to keep us in countenance. It may be that we can get up a revolt of three ships' crews, for the sake of giving us another day's liberty or two; but I'll believe it when I see it, and not before."

"But they ain't under no obligation to come here and work at our windlass," argued Jack Collins. "You can't oblige a man to go aboard another ship and work, anyhow."

"That may do for a theory," was the reply, "but whether it *can* be done or not, it is done every day in the week. The captains certainly won't refuse to give the order to help a brother captain who says he's in distress. And, as for the obligation to obey, even the Englishmen, salt and jolly as they appear to be when gaming with us, may think it a great deal more like plain sailing to just do what they're told, than to make asses of themselves because we have."

"Showing the white feather, eh? I did not think it o' you, Steady," said Collins, with a sneer.

"I shall show no white feather," was the wrathful retort of Owen, "till long after you've struck your flag altogether. If the matter ever comes to a square knock-down, you'll be found a long way astern of me; and that every one of my shipmates knows. But I did say that we were making asses of ourselves, and I say so yet; and what's more, I don't believe the Mohegan will back us up in it—nor the lime-juicers, either."

"Boats coming from both ships," reported some one, who had popped his head up at the scuttle to reconnoitre.

"Of course they are," said Steady, quietly; and the silence of suspense fell upon all.

The new-comers came down into the fore-castle when they first arrived, while the captains were holding a short conference aft. They professed full sympathy with our undertaking; but it was still evident, as Owen had predicted, that they were not prepared to form an alliance, offensive or defensive with us. We all began to perceive that it was too much to ask of them to disobey their own officers, out of sheer friendship for us. It was also evident that the captains had selected the men to compose the boats' crews with a view to their trustworthiness.

"Man the windlass!" was called again, a few minutes later, and our new crew went to their stations. Some of our own company were strongly minded to go, too; but the reaction was not yet strong enough to sustain them in doing so, and they were overruled, to stand by each other and see it out.

It was evident the ship would go to sea, at all events; and we must fight it out, somehow, in blue water. This would place us at a great disadvantage; for seamen seldom combine against regular authority on the ocean, unless there be some accomplished desperado among them, who feels competent to the task of commanding the ship. Your ordinary foremast-man always wants a hold upon *terra firma* to give him a stomach for rebellion; and if his ship be an uncomfortable one, the first sound of the anchor plunging towards the bottom acts as a strong temptation to him to throw his hat in air, and "give cheek" to the officers.

There was more thinking than talking going on in our little triangular den while the chain was slowly but surely coming in at the hawse-hole. The clanking noise of the brakes and pawls so close over our heads was unfavorable for conversation; as it would have been necessary to shout at each other in order to be heard.

The word "All a-weigh!" had been given; we could feel a slight heel of the ship as she began to "cast" her head; we heard the order to stand by the fore-braces, ready for filling away; when all at once the clank of the windlass was drowned by the stentorian cry from our own mate, "Avast heaving!" Then there was a Babel of voices, and a rush of feet, and the word was given, "Let go the other anchor, quick, and bring her up!"

"What's the matter now?" asked everybody of everybody else; and the same inquiry from the lips of Captain Hazard was answered, "Bight of a strange chain coming up on our anchor!"

Here was excitement for everybody. Of course the anxiety was great to get fast to it and save it; for aside from its intrinsic value, which might not be great, there was a mystery connected with it, and curiosity was on the *qui vive*. Our second anchor went, with a thundering plunge and rattle, down into the mud, and all sorts of frantic orders were given, in the haste to get a sure hold, by means of a hawser, of the strange chain; which, having caught over the stock of our anchor, was in danger of slipping off and going back to its old bed; in which case, one might have grappled a whole day without again hooking it.

"O, what's the use? Let's go up and have a hand in the fun!" said two or three of our best men. A start was made for the ladder; one after another followed. "Here! Lay hold of this rope and light along!" said the second mate, as if we had been all the time on duty. The mutiny, if such it could be termed, seemed to have been forgotten, for no one alluded to it.

We were successful in establishing a connection with the chain, and it was led into the windlass, every one heaving away with a will, Mohegans, "lime-juicers" and all. At the end of it we found an anchor, which was also secured; and from the marks upon the shackle, and the fragments of wood, first charred by fire and then water-logged, and other little but unmistakable evidences contained in its muddy load, our discovery shed light upon the fate of a fast-sailing trader, which had sailed from Oahu for Manilla, two years before, and had ever since been numbered among the missing. She had been cut off in this bay and her crew massacred. If further evidence were wanting, it was furnished in the conduct of the frightened natives, who had been, until now, hovering around us in their canoes. The sight of the strange chain above the surface was a sufficient accuser for their guilty consciences.

But all that has little to do with my story. When, two hours later, the word was given to "Man the windlass!" and given for any one to obey it who chose, the effect was curious in the extreme.

There was, it is true, some evidence of hesitation; of a desire to wait for each other. But reflection had come to our aid; the whole current of our thoughts had been diverted from its old channel; and it was exceedingly awkward to go back to our act of insubordination—to “begin where we had left off,” like a child which has suddenly changed from tears to laughter, for a moment, and would fain change back again. With sheepish looks at first, we all turned to at the brakes, and the *Corsica* did, indeed, go to sea that day, as Captain Hazard had determined that she should.

The subject was dropped from that hour forward. Neither officers nor men ever al-

luded to it in any way on duty; but it leaked out, through the steward, that the captain had made ample preparations for a life-and-death struggle to quell us had we persisted in resisting his authority after the ship was at sea. The next day we were among sperm whales, and the cruise proved a most lucky one. And the reader may not wonder to learn that from that date the *Corsica* was a better ship (in the seamen's sense of the phrase) than ever before; and that we made a long stay in the next port, enjoying our “liberty” till we began to surfeit of it. The voyage, altogether, was not an unpleasant one—always excepting that “nearness” in the commissariat department.

HOW I MASQUERADED AS A TRAVELLING AGENT.

BY CARL HOFFMANN.

It was the very last of June. Everybody, that is, everybody that is anybody, except of course, your very humble servant, was out of town. I was lonely and *ennuye*, just perishing for a new sensation. I strayed into the drawing-room, it was cool and dark, and reclining on the sofa, looked through half a dozen papers of the day before. In each one appeared a full column advertisement of the merits of a new Stove Polish, each ending with a stirring call for "Agents of either sex" to go forth and distribute the black blessing throughout the land.

"They must lead curious lives, those agents," I thought, wandering about the country in the way they do; in summer it might not be unpleasant. I quite envied them; I really thought I should like to be an agent myself. Yes, I, Miss Devens, the happy possessor of a half million in my own right, and receiving the income from another half million held in trust for an elder brother or his heirs, if either or both could be found. In parenthesis, my brother had made a perfectly respectable, but unsatisfactory marriage, which had separated him completely from his own family.

I was captivated with the thought of becoming an agent; my fancy surrendered itself completely to the delicious absurdity of such a proceeding.

It was still quite early in the day. I dressed in my gray travelling suit of two seasons before, took off the feathers from the black straw hat I had sported with, leaving only a narrow band of black velvet, fastened a light small veil round it, laid aside every particle of jewelry I was in the habit of wearing, and being something of an actress, assumed the general expression I believe to accord with the character I had assumed. Telling my housekeeper I was going out for the day, I set forth upon my adventures.

My first business was to hunt up the headquarters of the "Stove Polish." This I had little difficulty in doing, although I confess to having felt a little bit afraid for an instant, of, I hardly knew what, and to pausing full three seconds with the handle of the door in my hand before I found courage to push it open and enter the small neat

little room occupied by the principal agent for the North American Stove Polish Company. To my delight and relief the agent appeared a mild and moderately civil young man, in spite of a stern determination he seemed to entertain, not to take his hat off in anybody's presence.

I found little difficulty in comprehending the business I was to undertake, and with several dozen of the magic rolls, safely bestowed in my travelling satchel, (I was to receive half the profits resulting from my returns), I went forth to conquer or—not, as the case might be.

After a half hour's ride in the steam cars, I came to the pleasant country town where I proposed to try my experiments. I was a good walker, and the day was delicious.

The first house at which I presented myself was a low white-washed cottage so thoroughly neat in its outward appearance, that I felt morally certain that its inhabitants must use stove polish, even if perchance they at the moment were well supplied. As it proved they were *not* supplied, and very readily purchased the goods, I presented to their notice, making no demur in regard to the price.

My next pause was at a shop for stoves, tin ware, etc. The only one in the shop was a young Irishman; he made extensive purchases, and I, wishing to be wholly business-like, and remembering that all the agents of whom I had bought made it a point to record my name or beg me to record it in a kind of soiled business album which they carried for the purpose, very modestly asked:

"Will you give me your name, sir?"

A good-natured grin overspread his face.

"Indade, mish, its me name I'd give yer wid all me heart, and me hand besides, but sorra a bit a use it would be to yees anyway."

At the next house the door was opened by a red-faced man who, when I preferred a request to speak to the lady of the house, pushed the door to until only the tip of his red nose showed through the crack, and bawled out:

"Waal, you can speak to her by going to Chicago; she's been there this three weeks."

And the door closed with a bang that re-echoed from a large barn on the opposite side of the street.

At one house, as I waited in the hall, I overheard a conversation in which a lady's voice, evidently that of the mistress of the establishment, asked in a stage whisper:

"Is she pretty?"

"Yes," replied the young woman who had seen me, "she's quite pretty."

"Young?"

"Yes'm."

"Well, if she's young and pretty, and willing to do that for a living, I'll take a dollar's worth."

Whereupon the young woman came down stairs with a rush, presented the dollar bill, and for full three minutes patronized me almost out of breath.

So I went on from house to house, so successfully that I began almost to think that I ought really to be dependent upon my own exertions for a living.

And the hours went by and I had only two rolls of the polish left, and these were to bring me the one grand adventure of the day.

It was approaching four o'clock, and I began to feel some fatigue from my unusual exertions, and discovering a sufficiently retired spot I sat down to rest on a broad stone, pleasantly shaded by a group of pines. Before and around me a level country stretched itself out to the horizon, its monotony relieved by dividing walls and rough fences, or various grains and grasses. In the middle distance stood a small grove of pines, skirted by a line of white birches whose lithe stems showed gleaming against the gloomy background. And nearer, cattle wandering lazily from one fresh grazing spot to another.

To my certain knowledge I had never been in this town before. Why, then, was the landscape so wholly familiar? Had I dreamed of it, or actually realized it in some preëxistent state? Why did I feel that I had been in precisely the same spot before? The moment was fateful.

A half hour wore itself away in rest and reverie. Then I bethought me of my remaining rolls of polish. In the distance I could see a large square house, evidently one of the houses of the place. I felt quite curious to see the inside of it, and accordingly presented myself for admission at its lofty front entrance. My ring was promptly answered, and I was civilly invited to enter. As I stood waiting in the hall for some one

to come to speak to me, a side door was thrown open, and a boy of eight years, perhaps, came forward and inspected me curiously. As he came nearer so that I could see him distinctly, an involuntary exclamation of surprise escaped me.

"My aunty never buys anything at the door, so if you came here to sell something, it's no use," said the young man.

"I believe I came here to see you," I answered, surprised at my own words; "perhaps you will tell me your name."

"Arthur Devens," he replied, promptly; "but what did you come to see me for, if you did not know my name?"

I reached out my arms with a sudden impulse to draw him toward me, but paused with the thought, "Perhaps, after all, he is not my brother Arthur's child, despite the startling resemblance."

At that instant the lady of the house came to speak to me.

"Madam," I said, "I must beg a few words with you in private."

"Very well," she said, and invited me to a small reception room.

I briefly explained to her how I had happened to come there and the peculiar interest I felt in the boy.

"I think," she said, when I had finished, "that without doubt he is your brother's child. About three years ago his mother came into our family as seamstress. She was a delicate, interesting woman, and after she had been with us some weeks, I permitted the boy to join her here, for I believed her health to be seriously affected by her homesick longing to have him with her. She had been with me nearly a year before I could induce her to tell me the story of her early life, and her marriage with your brother, and her brief dream of happiness while he was spared to her, when her health failed decidedly, and our physician told us positively that her days with us were numbered. I urged her again and again to take some decisive steps to bring the child to the notice of her husband's relatives, but her invariable reply was:

"No, no, if they would not receive me into the family for Arthur's sake while he lived, what chance would there be now? At the best, my boy must depend upon his own exertions for a livelihood; I have your promise that he shall not be utterly friendless when I am taken away from him. I am satisfied with that."

"We have not adopted Arthur, but since his mother's death he has been as much one of the family as either of our own boys, and Mr. Ellerton, my husband, intended giving him the same advantages of education that they will receive. I have some letters and trinkets belonging to Mrs. Devens, which may be of value to you."

Mrs. Ellerton left the room, and after a short absence returned with a small package which she handed me. The letters furnished the almost unneeded proof that the boy Arthur was the only child of my only brother.

"I hope you will like to go and live with me, Arthur," I said, after our relationship had been explained to him.

"You are handsome, and you're jolly, too, tiptop for a woman, I should say, but you see, I don't think Uncle George could get along without me, he wants me for lots of things."

"Uncle George is my husband's brother," explained Mrs. Ellerton, in reply to my questioning look. "He has had charge of Arthur a great deal, and is very fond of him; it will be hard for him to let him go."

"Let him go? Where is he going?" demanded the voice of a gentleman who had entered the room unnoticed.

"He has found an aunt, or rather, his aunt has found him," said Mrs. Ellerton, pleasantly, and presented me to 'Uncle George.'

Just then the supper bell rang out its cordial invitation in the hall.

"Come," said Mrs. Ellerton, "we must give you some tea, Miss Devens."

"Indeed," I replied, "I am afraid I cannot accept the invitation; the time has run away so fast that I shall lose the train to the city if I delay many minutes longer."

"Plenty of time," said Uncle George, consulting his watch. "Arthur and I will drive you to the station."

"Good-night!" said Arthur, when we parted at the station, taking my hand in one of his own and gently stroking it with the other. "I like you, I shall like to go to visit you and stay ever so long, but I don't want to go away from Uncle George to live; I hope I shan't have to," he added, with an appealing glance at Mr. Ellerton.

"I hope not, I shall try not to have it happen," replied the latter, with a half-grave, half-laughing glance at me.

"At all events, if he will keep you, you can stay with him for a while longer," I said.

Arthur did not look half satisfied at this.

"Don't fret, Arthur," said Mr. Ellerton, kindly; "there is no hurry about making any changes; time will arrange your affairs satisfactorily I don't doubt."

Time made satisfactory arrangements, I suppose, for one day Mr. George Ellerton asked me if I thought I could endure life with him—a little on Arthur's account and a good deal on his own—it would be so hard for the two to be separated. And I, fully conscious that I ought to say "No," on Arthur's account said "Yes."

I find life with Mr. Ellerton endurable. And Arthur finds it endurable with both of us.

HUNTED DOWN.

The Story of a Woman's Wrongs.

BY MRS. R. B. EDSON.

FRANK HAZARD was hurrying home from his work. It was not a pleasant time to be abroad, judging from the haste every one seemed to be in, and the general recklessness with which people with umbrellas charged through the streets, knocking off the hats, and very nearly the heads of those unfortunate pedestrians who did not get out of their way. No one apologized for his rudeness—no one seemed to expect he would. A crowd is not naturally courteous and unselfish, in "honor preferring one another," under the most favorable circumstances. But when a fierce east wind is driving an icy rain in the face, ay, even through the "joints and marrow," the careful student of human nature can find some new phases in selfishness and incivility, fully equal to the sublimity of the occasion.

The 5.30 train was just in from the north, and the street leading up from the depot was thronged with carriages as well as pedestrians. Hazard regretted he had taken this street, though the more direct route, before he had gone a dozen rods, and had half a mind to turn and go back. Possibly he might, if it had not been for a big broad-shouldered fellow just in advance of him, who, with an enormous pair of cowhide boots, and an umbrella to match, served as a sort of John the Baptist in preparing the way for him. Such amazing indifference as the fellow manifested, too! Nothing impeded his progress—shawl fringes, skirts of dresses, beauty in distress, and indignant old gentlemen with canes and corns—all, all went down before his triumphal march. If it had not been such abominable weather, Frank Hazard would have been amused at the unconscious *sang-froid* of this human Juggernaut. For even good-humored people succumb to an east wind, and with so disagreeable an accompaniment, it would be too much to expect of human nature that it consent to be amused with anything.

But he was not quite lost to compassion, and so when he saw a slight girlish figure reel, and almost slip down on the wet

sloshy pavement, after coming in contact with this reckless Hercules, he caught her arm and prevented her from quite falling.

"Thank you, sir," she said, with a quick glance back at the powerful form striding down the street with such sublime unconcern.

"The hero of Longfellow's 'Excelsior'?" Hazard said, actually laughing, despite the depressing circumstances.

The lady smiled faintly as she turned her face towards him, and then each again hurried on in their opposite ways.

There is no time when a pleasant home looks so attractive as on one of these dismal drenching nights. There is a softer light pervading the room; a mellow glow brightens the pictures and the walls, and the warmth seems like some beautiful invisible spirit, come to make comfort and brightness in the home.

Frank Hazard's face softened into a smile when he opened the door of the pleasant sitting-room at his home. Involuntarily he ran his eyes up and down the room. It was a charming apartment, with soft shades and tones of color; with elegant pictures in massive frames, hanging from the walls, and luxurious festoons of dark green English ivy looped against exquisite little statuettes of snowy marble, resting on daintily-carved brackets in the corners. The heavy damask curtains fell in pale crimson folds to the floor, and unique little tete-a-tetes and easy-chairs of garnet velvet, with quaintly-carved backs of ebony, were distributed about the room in the most inviting manner. A magnificent camellia, with half a dozen pure waxen blossoms, contrasting with its shining green leaves, sat on a little marble-topped stand in the bay-window, and just above it, in an emerald and white cage, swung a beautiful snowy-crested cockatoo. And over all, steeping it in an amber rosy glow, fell the firelight and the gaslight in shimmering waves.

The young man stood a moment, holding the door ajar, and smiling faintly, with a

dreamy look in his blue eyes. Then he closed the door softly, and went through the hall to the dining-room.

"How nice it is to have a home such nights as this!" he said, smilingly. And then, his face grew graver. "It is painful to even *think* of one's being homeless in such weather."

"Yes, but people get used to anything," Doctor Hazard said, carelessly.

"You didn't walk, Frank?" asked a handsome fair-faced woman, looking up at him with a proud fond look.

"Certainly, little mother. Let the women and old men ride this weather, if they like, but not I. I need the exercise after sitting all day at my work. And by the way, I have taken the contract for the plan of the new Episcopal church in Winkly Street. They want something pretty nice, so here is a chance for me to make myself famous," and he laughed lightly, yet with a proud eager look in his eyes.

"I thought they were going to import an architect expressly to furnish plans for that church!" Doctor Hazard said, laughing. "I'm sure I heard something of the kind."

Just here two pretty, genteel-looking girls of twelve and fourteen years came in, and the family sat immediately down to supper, where with the pleasant glitter and ring of silver and crystal, the faint aroma of tea, the bright lights, the summery warmth—amid pleasant talk and soft laughter, we will leave them for a while.

Among the passengers on the 5.30 train had been a young woman who seemed possessed of two about equally strong desires. One was to avoid observation, and the other to leave some place, or some thing, as rapidly as possible. She looked annoyed and impatient at every stoppage they made, and correspondingly relieved when they moved on.

Conductors of railway trains are generally observant men. They see very much more than you would believe possible, in the sharp rapid glance they give you with such apparent indifference. Their eyes are the most marvellous of cameras, whereon is daguerreotyped a constant panorama of forms and faces with such wonderful exactness, that it is very rarely they make a mistake and ask a person twice for his ticket.

The young woman above alluded to had therefore failed most signally in one of her

desires. The very measures she took defeated her object, and attracted a closer attention from the conductor, who, with his powers of observation preternaturally developed by necessity, could not help noticing how carefully the thick brown veil was kept over her face, the face itself nearly always averted, save when some new passengers entered the car, when for an instant the veiled eyes glanced hurriedly at the newcomers and then fell again. And so when she left the cars at Lowell he made a little mental note of it.

The young woman paused a moment after alighting, and then went to the baggage-room and deposited a large valise, to be kept till called for. She also took occasion to ask for some moderate-priced hotel, which suggested the idea of limited finances, though her rich furs and heavy silks contradicted the supposition. What made it more paradoxical, she declined a carriage, though evidently shrinking nervously from the battle with the elements, and being also, evidently, a total stranger in the city.

Arrived at the hotel she went immediately to her room, after first registering the name of Isabel Vane. She did not come down again that night, but late the next morning, after the dining-room was empty, she came in, dressed for the street, and ate a light breakfast, looking over a morning paper the while. Presently she arose, putting the paper aside, and went to the office and settled her bill, and then went out into the street.

When Frank Hazard came home to dinner, Ada, his younger sister, came out into the hall to meet him, her face aglow with delight.

"O Frank! you cannot guess who is here," she exclaimed, eagerly.

"Arthur is not home?" he asked, quickly. Arthur was a younger brother away at school.

"O no! But you know that wonderful seamstress mamma has been in search of so long? Well, she is found; and I might add, 'she is all our fancy painted her, she is lovely, she is divine.' But come in and see for yourself; only you mustn't fall in love with her, Frank, dear, because she hasn't got any references, and nobody knows anything about her."

The young man laughed at Ada's enthusiasm, as well as her ludicrous way of

putting the case, and followed her in. A tall slender woman, with brown wavy hair looped away from a low broad forehead, stood before one of the windows, looking absently into the street. She started when the door opened, and sat down without looking up.

After a moment's talk, Mrs. Hazard introduced her son to Miss Isabel Vane, seamstress. Then the dark eyes were lifted suddenly, and a cool bow given. Frank Hazard returned it quietly enough, but a puzzled look rested on his face. Where had he seen Miss Vane before? It haunted him all dinner-time, and he could hardly keep from being rude, and staring at her, in his efforts to recall where it was he had seen that face before.

When dinner was over, Mrs. Hazard called her son aside and asked his opinion of her selection.

"She is very lady-like and pretty, only she has an odd, startled, hunted sort of a look in her eyes. Did it strike you?" he asked.

"Not particularly. She has those large dark eyes, which are always full of lights and shadows. I hope I shall not be sorry I took her, for any reason. Somehow I couldn't refuse to give her a trial, she begged me to so earnestly, and there was such an appealing look in her great shadowy eyes. She is an utter stranger in the city—in the State, too, she said—and came here to enter the mills, but chancing to see my advertisement for a seamstress, answered it, very much preferring it on account of privacy. She is naturally reserved, I should judge, by her manners, and that is an advantage. She is refined and wellbred, and that is the point I have been particular about. It has been difficult finding just such a person as I felt willing to bring into the house with Olive and Ada. Necessarily she must be a part of the family, for I am so often ill with those dreadful headaches, that I am unable to have charge of the family wardrobe. There is only one drawback to my pleasure in securing just such a seamstress as I have been looking for so long, and that is, I don't know anything about her."

"Neither does she about us," he answered, laughing. "There'll be time enough for us to find each other out."

"And yet I should like to be sure of her good character," she returned, looking a

little anxious. "You know Olive and Ada are at an age when impressions are quickly and easily made."

"Certainly, mother, you do not intend Miss Vane as a *companion* for them!" he said, with a little touch of hauteur in his tone.

At that instant Miss Vane passed the door on her way to the sitting-room. Frank Hazard bit his lips savagely, and blushed to the roots of his light curling hair.

"You made me say it, mother," he said, indulging the natural masculine propensity which all the sons of Adam have inherited, of laying the blame of their own misdeeds on some woman.

"Probably she did not hear you. I hope she did not, for I do not like to have any one's feelings wounded in my house," Mrs. Hazard said, gravely.

"I'll beg her pardon if I did do so," he cried, and impulsively hurried on after Miss Vane, whom he found standing very white and still before the grate.

"Miss Vane," he said, with a sort of proud humility, "I am come to ask your pardon for making an ungenerous and uncalled-for remark just now. I think you heard it?" She bowed, and a swift color shot to her temples. "I am very sorry I so far forgot myself as to say anything which could wound the feelings of any one, especially a stranger, who needs, particularly, kindness and consideration. Will you forgive my rudeness, Miss Vane?"

"If there is anything to forgive—yes," she said, in a low sweet voice, and looking up into his face with a faint smile.

"Why, you are the lady I met last evening!" he exclaimed, breathlessly. "I knew I had seen you somewhere—I fancied it must have been in some previous state of existence."

They both laughed, and Mrs. Hazard coming in was informed of the incident of the previous evening, and so the embarrassment they all felt was got rid of.

Miss Vane proved to be a perfect prize to the Hazards. She was not only skilled in all manner of needle-work, but she was "worth her weight in gold as a nurse," Doctor Hazard said. In fact, Mrs. Hazard's dreadful headaches lost more than half their terror, with Miss Vane's cool hands to soothe away the fierce heat from the throbbing temples, and tone the light so perfectly to the swollen eyes, and regu-

late the temperature so evenly that she felt neither heat nor chill.

Olive and Ada were not long in finding out that Miss Vane had a sweet voice, and though she resisted their teasings a long time, she yielded at length, and some of the pleasantest evenings they enjoyed was when Miss Vane sang some sweet tender ballad, accompanying it with such rare delicate touches as showed she was an exquisite pianist as well as singer.

The winter slipped away before any of them were half aware. Arthur came home for his vacation, and with boyish susceptibility, fell ludicrously in love with Miss Vane, and wrote sonnets to her eyes and hair, which were more ludicrous still. The fact that she was twenty-seven and he eighteen, had not the slightest effect in any argument held upon the subject.

Finding at length that his ridiculous persistence annoyed Miss Vane, Frank scolded him pretty severely.

"O! I know what it means now," he said, hotly, "you're in love with her yourself, and you want me out of your way!"

Frank laughed at the boyish importance and conceit, but he did not dare ask himself if the accusation was in any respect true. He was proud, and Miss Vane was only a sort of upper servant, talented, and refined, and lovely as she was; and though he admired her, and sought her society, he could not quite forget that.

There had a great change come over Isabel Vane since she came into Doctor Hazard's family. The dead pallor of her face had given place to a soft rosy pearl, and a rich red had come into her lips, and her eyes were like stars in their soft splendor. Gradually, as the days went by, the pained, hunted look left them, and even the children said, "How beautiful Miss Vane grows!"

"Miss Vane," Mrs. Hazard said, one day when she was sitting beside her in the dreary twilight of the room, making light anæsthetic passes over her hot throbbing temples, "it makes me quite wretched to think that some day you may marry and go away from me."

"I shall never marry, Mrs. Hazard," she replied, in an odd hollow tone.

"Then I shall keep you always," the lady rejoined, with a smile. "I shall recognize no authority but a husband's to take you from me."

Afterwards she remembered the sudden chill and tremor of the hand upon her temples, which, though she noticed it at the time, did nothing more than make her start and look a little more closely into her companion's face. But the light was too indistinct to see any emotion—if any there was—in the slightly averted face.

The months had ran away as if enchanted, and May with its pale blossoms had come and almost gone, when one day Ada came into the sewing-room where Miss Vane sat surrounded with delicate fabrics—dainty muslins with drooping sprays of lilac, exquisite foulards with moss-rose-buds looking out of soft silver grays and sea-greens, and delicate lavenders, and over and around all a perfect tangle of ribbons, and fringes, and laces.

"O Miss Vane, there is an abominable man come to see you, and you'll have to go down, I suppose," she said, half vexed and half laughing.

"A—a man?" Miss Vane asked, turning so white that Ada cried out in alarm.

"Hush, dear, it is only—only because you startled me," she said, in a voice that trembled and hesitated. Then she asked, evidently with a painful effort, "How does he look? this man who wants me?"

"Well, I didn't mind, only that he had whiskers clear round his face in the picture-frame style, which I particularly detest, and he—he isn't young, nor pretty, and his eyes are so black, and his brows meet over them, and he can look right *through* a millstone, I am sure," she said, in a tone of disgust.

Miss Vane's face brightened just a little. She arose and slipped a little sack of pale pink cashmere over her green and white striped poplin, and went out.

"He is in papa's little reception-office, the front one, you know," Ada called after her.

Miss Vane paused a moment at the door, trying to steady her nerves. She was so cold! Then she opened the door and advanced into the room. A gentleman sitting beside the table rose at her entrance, and leaning one hand on the table, looked at her sharply from beneath his heavy black brows.

"Have I the honor of seeing Miss Vane—Miss Isabel Vane?" he asked, slowly.

She bowed, and looked away from him in a pitiful helpless sort of a way. There

was a little moment of silence; she standing in an attitude of stolid expectancy, the pallor of her face contrasting sharply with the dark abundant hair, and the great shadowy eyes, he regarded her intently, possibly with a faint feeling of pity stirring deep down in his heart.

"I am glad I have found you, Miss Vane," he said, presently, with an accent on the prefix there was no mistaking. The last faint spark of hope died then in her heart. "I suppose," he continued, "you prefer that the story should not be told to these people, as it must have been if you had managed to elude me in any way. You have put us to a great deal of trouble to find you, Miss Vane."

"Where is he?" she asked, in a hollow voice, a little shiver convulsing her frame.

"Your husband? Well, I regret to say that Mr. Brainard is not in this city, but I shall telegraph to him immediately. He is in Concord, and will not be able to reach here before midnight, so you will not meet him until morning."

A sudden curious light shot into her face. He saw it, and taking a step toward her said in a kind voice:

"Mrs. Brainard, let me advise you to yield to fate. You have fought against it a year, and you know how impossible it is to think to escape long, at best. Go back and try to do your duty, if it is hard."

"Duty?" she interrupted, fiercely, turning full upon him; "do you mean to tell me that I owe any duty to Luke Brainard, after all that has passed?"

"You are his wife," he said, composedly.

"God pity me—yes!" her face both bitter and despairing. "If I was not, he could not hunt me down with bloodhounds!"

"It is my business to trace out runaways; I take no sides for or against either party; I simply do my own legitimate work," he said, in his slow cool way.

"How long can I have?" she asked, abruptly, without noticing his remark. "I am in your power; be merciful, as you may some day need mercy, and give me till he comes."

"You must not think to escape, if I grant you this armistice?"

"I pledge you my word that I will not attempt to leave the city by any carriage or train, so you need not be to the trouble of posting guards at the various points of

departure. I also promise that I will make no resistance to Mr. Brainard's authority when he comes; he shall take me whithersoever he pleases. I am weary of striving against fate," she said, in a dreary, hopeless voice. "I cannot struggle with it longer."

"I shall immediately telegraph to your husband, Mrs. Brainard," he said, kindly, "and until he comes you are at liberty. I will wait at my hotel, and when he comes will communicate with you. You see, I depend upon your truth and honor not to run away again, as you have twice done when you were discovered."

"I repeat, Mr. Brainard shall take me back to-morrow without any word of opposition on my part. I will be ready when he comes," she said, with more calmness than she had previously shown.

Mr. Gifford, the detective, went back to his hotel well pleased that the unpleasant business was got over so easily. It was a genuine pleasure for him to follow and "work up" a case, but something about this made him feel disagreeably like a criminal, himself. He was not ever-troubled with sentiment, nor easily moved by other people's sorrows, but something in the white despairing face of this woman appealed to his latent generosity, and made him resolve to be as easy with her as he could. And, notwithstanding the promises he had exacted from her, and the great trouble he had been at to discover her hiding-place, there was in his heart a vague unacknowledged wish, that somehow she might manage to escape Luke Brainard, after all.

Miss Vane—as we still call her—went back to her work after her caller had gone, and though very pale, gave no sign of the terrible struggle which must have been going on in her heart. She finished a dress for Ada, putting on the soft feathery ruffles with a sort of loving lingering touch. She laid out and arranged tasteful designs, explaining them to Mrs. Hazard, and finished up several little pieces of work which particularly needed skillful fingers to perfect them. She was unusually gentle, even affectionate in her intercourse with them all, and came nearer their hearts that day than she ever had before.

The evening was one of those rare spring nights when the earth seems wrapped in a soft dream of heaven. Faint odors floated

through the drowsy air, and the sky leaned low over the earth. They all sat out on the piazza till the long twilight faded into purple shadows. Miss Vane was with them, charming them anew with her ease and rare conversational powers. She was, as they afterward remembered, gayer and more brilliant than they had ever seen her. When she stood a moment under the hall lamp before going up to her chamber, Ada came up and put her arms about her.

"How beautiful you are to-night, Miss Vane!" she cried, admiringly. "Your cheeks are like the heart of mamma's tea-roses. O, how should we ever live without you, dear Miss Vane?"

Miss Vane stooped suddenly, and drew the girl into her arms, and kissed her passionately.

"God bless you, darling, for all the sunshine you have brought into a desolate heart!" she said, turning and walking hastily back to the door.

Frank Hazard was just coming in, and had heard Ada's last declaration. When Miss Vane met him she stepped aside, but he put out his hand.

"Miss Vane," he said, in a low tone, "I am haunted continually by the question Ada has asked, 'How are we—how am I—to ever live without you?'"

A sudden glow, like sunshine on the morning clouds, illumined her face, as she turned it one brief supreme instant toward Hazard. Then she turned abruptly and fled—actually fled, as if pursued by some fiend—up the broad stairway to her chamber. A half hour later Frank Hazard went leisurely up the same stairs, a soft light in his eyes, and a snatch of tender song on his lips.

The doctor was called away during the night, and had not returned at the usual breakfast hour. Indeed no one, hardly, seemed to be prompt this morning. Mrs. Hazard had premonitions of headache, Miss Vane had not come down, and Frank and the girls were taking a rather lugubrious meal, when they were startled by a sharp impatient ring. A moment, and a servant came to the door and said, "a gentleman wanted Miss Vane immediately."

Frank went out to the door. A large coarse-looking man, with heavy beard of sandy gray, stood in an impatient attitude just outside the threshold.

"Miss Vane has not yet risen; have you

important business, sir?" Hazard asked of the man.

"Well, yes, if it could be called important for a man to demand to see his wife," he said, with a blustering air.

"I do not understand you," Hazard replied, slowly, something sharp and chill like a knife striking through his heart.

"I dare say not. Well, I'll make it plain. The lady you have been harboring as 'Miss Vane,' is my runaway wife, Mary Isabel Brainard. If you have any doubts about the truth of my statement, call her and see if she dares deny it."

This was said with such an air of authority and ownership that Frank went out and sent Olive up to Miss Vane's room to ask her to come down as soon as possible. Returning to the hall he heard a low cry from the upper hall, and almost immediately Olive came flying down the stairs, pale and affrighted.

"O Frank! go up to Miss Vane, quick!" she cried, bursting into hysterical tears. "She is dead, or in a fit. I touched her and her face is like ice!" and she shivered in the warm May sunshine, and covered her face, as if to shut out some sad sight.

"Come!" Frank said, sternly; and suddenly grown silent and abashed, the stranger followed him up stairs, and together they looked down upon the still beautiful face, with what differing emotions only God and their own hearts can ever know.

"Did she know you were coming after her?" Hazard asked, a sudden light breaking in his mind.

"Yes. I have had a detective looking for her these four or five months, and yesterday he found her here, and telegraphed to me to come for her. She promised him to be ready to go back with me," he said, with a sort of sullen awe in his voice.

"Well, Mr. Brainard, since you have hunted her down, you ought to be satisfied," Hazard said, coldly. "Perhaps it was the only way it was possible for her to keep her promise."

The man muttered a low oath under his breath, but nothing more was said. The detective came in, and Dr. Hazard returned, and there was the usual inquest. "Death from morphia" was the verdict, as they had very well known before by the small half filled phial of white powder lying on her dressing-table. A letter directed to Mrs. Hazard was found beside it, and after

they were alone, it was opened and read.

"I cannot," it began, "be so ungrateful for all your love and kindness to the stranger, as to leave you in ignorance of the cause that has driven me to this last terrible step.

"I was persuaded by parents and friends into a marriage with Luke Brainard before I was seventeen. He was rich—we poor, and striving to be genteel, and keep up appearances on five hundred dollars a year for four of us. I was just from school, my mind and judgment unformed. Like all girls, I was flattered at having a lover, and before I realized what I was doing, they had me fairly committed to him. I tried then to break away, but it was too late. And so I became Luke Brainard's wife. What I suffered in these years I could not tell if I would. He was coarse, brutal and low in his tastes. He drank enough to kill an ordinary man, but he could always walk under his heaviest potations. It only excited his temper and made him almost a madman if aught crossed him. He filled the house with companions of his own type, men whose presence was an insult to a pure woman, and to crown all, boasted of his successes among the female companions of these men. I shrunk away in disgust from him—I *could not* help it—and this angered him beyond description. I was proud, and we stood high in the social scale, and I kept

the secret ten long—O Heaven! how long—years. At the end of that time I fled from his house. I could not endure this sort of life, and live another day, it seemed to me. Twice, when I had found employment and a home, his emissaries have found me out, but I managed to elude them. Yesterday, for the third time, my hiding-place was discovered. *There is no hope of escape for me save death.* If I sin in this thing, God, who alone knoweth all my temptation and despair, will not deal hardly with me.

"Dear friends! Try to think kindly of me, as one who has suffered much, but who *cannot* endure more. I have deceived you, but I dared not reveal myself—I had such a presentiment all the time that I was being hunted down. You cannot help me if you would, for he is my husband, and can force me to go back to that terrible life again, and knowing this, I choose—death! I have been so happy these few bright months in your pleasant home—O heaven! and it is all over, forever! God—and you, too, dear friends—pity and forgive me!

"ISABEL."

And this was all. A sad ending, you say, for a story. I know, but alas! these sorrowful tragedies will happen, and human hearts and flesh are weak sometimes, and faint by the wayside.

God, who knoweth all, judge her, not we.

IF HE WANTED HER.

BY FENNO HAYES.

LIZ wont be whiter, cheek nor lip, when she's dead, but she did not tremble in voice or limb as she stepped forward to speak and give her hand to the man who had kissed her as his promised wife, the last time they parted; the man who had a right to expect those same warm red lips now to greet his coming instead of that cold snowy hand. O, I thought of the silks and velvets up stairs and down stairs, everywhere but in the drawing-room almost, it seemed to me, of the diamond blazing on her white hand, and I saw Liz, false, forsworn Liz, standing between the gray old man whose gifts these all were and Allen Raleigh, and I cried out maliciously:

"O sing for us, Liz. Sing 'Auld Robin Gray.'"

And the stupid old man echoed, "Yes, my dear, sing 'Auld Robin Gray.'"

And one sat on one side of the piano and one on the other while she sung, the young man and the old, the old lover and the new. But for me, I sat in a corner and wept softly, while nobody minded, for I heard Liz's heart cry and sob in the song, as she sang to Allen, only to Allen and Allen's heart.

I met her in the upper hall afterwards that night, and I snatched at her hand, remorseful.

"O Liz," I said, "forgive me, I didn't mean to be cruel. I've been angry all the while, but I'm only sorry now."

She stooped and kissed me, but she only said, more as if to herself than to me:

"How else could I have told him?"

Then some impulse made me turn and go

out into the night, and there, beneath the stars, I met Allen striding up and down the garden walks.

I say what I like always, because I'm a poor dwarfed cripple that nobody thinks it worth while to cross or quarrel with, and I went up to Allen and said:

"If I were a man and held a woman's heart, I'd take her, if I met her going to the altar with another."

My words must have chimed well with his mood, for he said, quick and sharp:

"And so would I, and so will I, if it comes to that. Now tell me, Roland, what all this is about." And he laid his hand impatiently on my shoulder, while his eyes flashed down on mine through the starlit dark.

But I liked him, this eager, impetuous young lover of Liz; liked him as I do all things warm and passionate, and I began:

"Liz is to marry—"

But Allen Raleigh laid his hand in an instant significantly on my lips, and I understood, and began again.

"She was to have married this old man in a month from now. You were scarcely out of sight of land when Kate and mother began to urge it; but Liz never minded their talking any more than if it had been the wind blowing at her ear, I thought, till one day father went about with a face worn and haggard, and his eyes looking as if he hadn't slept for more than one night, mother was crying up stairs, and if Liz had been in another world she couldn't have taken much less notice of what was going on in this,

She sat in her room all day long, by the window that looks out over the water, still and silent, with her hands clasped over her knees, and her eyes far out to sea. About night-fall she came down to the library where father was sitting, and I was reading, curled up in a window. She came in and walked straight up to father and said, 'Tell him yes, father.' A wonderful light flashed over father's face. He was about to speak, but she put up her hand as if to ward off a blow. 'Not a word now, father,' she said, 'tell him, that's all.' And she turned and fairly fled out of the room. But as she raised her hands I saw your ring was gone, and I knew then what it meant, and angry enough I was, and have been, with her ever since till to-night—till I heard her sing to you, Allen."

"My poor darling," he murmured; and then I slipped away, so sure that he would save Liz somehow that I stopped at her door as I went by.

"Come in," she said; and as I entered and saw her sitting in her loose white wrapper, with her long dark hair unbound and hanging about her, I thought I had never seen her look so beautiful, though I fancied I saw traces of tears on her cheeks.

"I've just seen Allen," I said. "He will never give you up, Liz."

She smiled, a transient, passing, but ineffable smile, the smile that only love can teach a woman's lips, I fancy, and then her face settled again into the stony resolute expression it had worn since the day I told Allen of.

"Roland," she said, "carry Allen from me this one message. If Mr. Grafton wishes me to marry him, I must and will. Remember, Roland, I must and will."

Liz has a way sometimes of shutting herself away from anybody's reach, and I've no fancy for asking questions and getting no answers, so I didn't ask why, but went down to the garden again to see if Allen were gone yet.

But he was still there, passing up and down the walks as before. The light from Liz's window shone out upon the paths, and I thought perhaps he found it sweet to be even so near her he loved, after the wide sea had lain between them so long. And then my heart sunk, thinking of the message I had for him. I sat down under the rose tree to think a little how to begin, and there Allen found me, not a bit more ready than I was at first. But I stammered it out, somehow--

I indeed, I don't mind saying that I half sobbed, as I told it, for I had always loved Liz dearly, and as for gray old Mr. Grafton, it frightened me to think how wicked I felt about him. While I had been sitting under the rose tree I had been imagining such a fine funeral for him, supposing he should have the accommodating goodness to die, and a fine wedding afterwards, with Liz looking like a Peri, or something of that kind, for Liz's beauty isn't of the angel sort, and Allen like a prince, supposing princes looked as royal blood ought to look.

But to my surprise Allen didn't seem to much mind this message. He repeated it carefully after me, just as Liz had said it, and then he said, "Carry her back for me only this, Roland—my undying, hopeful love." And I left him with his proud head erect, and his whole bearing little like a despairing, cast-off lover, I thought.

Well, Mr. Grafton came every day, and Allen came every day. But you would never have dreamed Allen came to see Liz. Grafton didn't, I know, for Liz's engagement to Allen had never been made public, and Grafton's eyes must have been considerably sharper than they were to see a lover in this man who appeared so politely indifferent to Liz. Strangely enough, Allen seemed to like and court Grafton's society. He would talk with him by the hour, and appeared to have a peculiar fancy for drawing Grafton out, learning his likes and dislikes. I couldn't make Allen out at all, but still I felt somehow that he hadn't given Liz up.

One day Allen and Grafton happened to be alone in the drawing room. To be sure I was there, but I was reading, and everybody knows I'm deaf and blind to everything thing else when I have a book. So I didn't mind at all what they were saying, till suddenly my attention was arrested, just as if there hadn't been a word spoken before, though, of course, they had been talking all the while, by Grafton's saying:

"Well, I don't know of but one thing that I am really afraid of, and that is an insane person. I never could take one moment's comfort afterwards with a person who had once shown any signs of insanity. I've a perfect horror about it."

I met Allen's eye just then. Was it a fancy that it flashed triumphantly?

At this moment, Liz came in and the conversation turned on something else. I went back to my book and heard no more, till late

In the afternoon Allen came and leaned carelessly over my shoulder, as if to see what I was so absorbed in, and a little note dropped from his hand between the leaves of my book. He turned the page quickly, saying laughingly:

"Allow me, your hand must be tired. How many pages to-day, Roland?"

Of course the note was for Liz, and you may be sure it was properly delivered. But nothing came of it, as I could see, and the days were going frightfully fast. Was it the consciousness of this that made Liz so strange, and abrupt, and fitful in her speech and manner? What made her voice and laugh so loud? Well, Liz was proud, but if she was trying to keep up appearances, I thought she was rather overdoing it. I fancied, too, that Mr. Grafton regarded her a little uneasily sometimes, when she appeared so very gay with no apparent reason.

There came a wild stormy morning, the wind blowing almost a gale, and the rain driving across the fields in sheets. I happened to be looking from an upper window, when, to my astonishment, Tom led Liz's horse round to the door, and at the moment I heard Liz going down the stairs.

"Why, my dear," I heard Mr. Grafton say, in a shocked voice, "where are you going?"

Liz laughed a wild, loud, shrill laugh.

"Your lady rides abroad this morning," she said, passing him rapidly and laughing again.

And, a moment after, I looked down upon a curious scene. Liz, arrayed in one of the dresses sacred to Mr. Grafton's bride, with fluttering ribbons and a dress hat upon her head, rode away at a furious gallop through the pouring rain, looking back as she went and gayly waving her hand to the bewildered and distressed looking old man who gazed after her in blank dismay, while Tom walked to the stables, gravely shaking his honest head.

What did it mean? Was Liz crazy? What should we do? Father was away for a few days, mother had one of her nervous headaches, and Mr. Grafton had said he had a perfect horror of an insane person.

Suddenly, as I remembered this, a little chain of circumstances ran through my mind. I seemed to hear Allen again, repeating after me, with strange emphasis, Liz's message—"If Mr. Grafton *wishes* me to marry him"—Allen's watch and intimacy with Grafton—the expression of Grafton's dislike, before

spoken of—Allen's glance at that moment—the note to Liz—and now this.

What if there were method in Liz's madness? She was capable of carrying out a part like this, for Liz is no milk-and-water girl that one can twist round one's finger. I had long ago come to the conclusion that father was in some way at Grafton's mercy, and Liz was the appeasing sacrifice. Now if Grafton refused her after she had accepted him, could he find any fault? Well, at any rate, I resolved to keep still at present, and wait for further developments.

I went down stairs, thinking I'd like to see if Grafton's face had regained its customary smooth urbane expression. He usually took little notice of me, for I had taken small pains to conceal my dislike of him, but he came hurriedly forward to meet me now.

"Your father is away, Roland?" he said, as an introductory inquiry.

"Yes sir," I said, "to be gone till Wednesday."

"Ah," he said, uneasily. "Where is Mrs. Lane?"

"Not up yet, I think," said I. "Mother has one of her bad days."

He must speak to somebody, so now he broke out to me:

"Roland, your sister has gone to ride this wild morning. What can possess her?"

"O, I don't know," I answered, rather carelessly. "Liz always was rather peculiar."

"I don't know what you call *peculiar*," he said, sharply, "but it seems to me more like a mad person than anything else, for a girl to go riding away at breakneck speed, through a rain like this, in a dress as fantastic as her notion."

"O," I said, again, "I never pretend to be surprised at anything Liz does. It runs in our family to be odd. I wouldn't advise you to cross her much, though, because—" And then I stopped, as if I had said more than I intended.

"Because why?" said Grafton, imperiously, almost fiercely.

"O nothing, nothing," I said, turning away, and finding myself a book, I pretended to be as absorbed as usual.

But I was watching Grafton all the while and I saw the big drops of sweat standing on his forehead as he walked up and down the room, waiting his wild lady-love's return. But when she came he did not go out to meet her, only peering furtively at her from behind a blind as she dismounted, and then resum-

ing his pacing of the floor. After a little, Allen came in, and, as usual, my book was considered to make me a nobody, if, indeed, Grafton had not entirely forgotten me, in his agitation.

"Mr. Raleigh," said Grafton, shortly, hesitating a little, but with a subdued, repressed eagerness, "do you know anything of the Lane family—Miss Lane's relatives or ancestors?"

"Somewhat," said Allen, with a surprised, inquiring air, as if he wondered what Grafton was driving at.

"Well, do you know—have you ever heard—that there was any peculiarity in the family, any taint of—well, of insanity, in short?"

"They are all people of extreme nervous susceptibility—the Lanes," said Allen, "excitable, and fond of out-of-the-way adventures, but I do not know that I ever heard of any one's being insane. Stay, now I think of it, Miss Lane has an uncle incurably insane in the asylum at S."

O Allen! Mother's sister's husband!

"But why do you ask regarding this matter?" said Allen, in conclusion. "You seem agitated, Mr. Grafton. Has anything happened?"

Grafton made a sickly attempt to smile.

"No, Mr. Raleigh," he said, "nothing has happened. I have a curiosity about family traits, always." And with this rather lame excuse, Grafton soon departed, not completely at his ease, I imagined.

But evening found him again at the house, and I thought Liz and her gray lover had changed characters. She had always before been so coy of his near approach, shrinking away from his look and touch. But that night he it was who seemed to dread having her near him, only watching her closely and suspiciously at as great distance as possible. Liz

appeared pretty much as usual, with the exception of rather haunting Grafton and an occasional burst of sudden gayety.

What helped the farce much was that Liz's manner towards Grafton had always been a little strange, from the circumstances, and she was, besides, a really original, independent character. He knew nothing, of course, of Allen's communication to Liz of his weak spot, and the idea once in his mind, "trifles, light as air," seemed "confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ." I watched him closely that evening, and I came to the conclusion that, whatever Grafton had once designed, he would never again want Liz for a wife.

And, sure enough, father wasn't home an hour, before Grafton waited on him and withdrew his suit. I have a faculty for overhearing, perhaps you've noticed, but I won't deny that I helped my capacity on this occasion by laying my ear to a convenient keyhole.

What I heard is of no consequence excepting this:

"Mr. Lane," said Grafton, "business is business, and a bargain a bargain. I offered you this bit of paper with my autograph upon it, written, however, by you, for your daughter's hand. You accepted. That I do not take the article, having reconsidered, for reasons I need not state, is no fault of yours. Here is your price."

I turned my eye, instead of my ear, to the keyhole just in time to catch the gleam of the burnt note as it blazed in the grate where father tossed it. Poor father! If he would only let those accursed stocks and speculations alone!

Well, that was the end of Grafton at our house, and I didn't mind missing his funeral so long as he let Liz alone, but for the wedding, Liz did look like a houri and Allen like a prince royal, I will say.



IN A COBBLER'S SHOP.

BY BLANCHE SHAW.

"WELL! he's come at last!" And Alice Martin tossed her hat on one chair, and dropped herself upon another.

"Who has come?" asked her sister Mattie, lazily, without looking up from an idiotic "Moses," who was staring blankly at her from a New England breadtray of bulrushes.

"Who! As if you didn't know! Why, that wonderful Clarence Crane, of course, of whom the Winslows have been talking for the last month. I met Ellen Winslow coming from the Browns. She told the news, and also invited us all to go there this evening to drink tea on the lawn, and have a dance after. And—my good gracious!" she suddenly cried, startled out of propriety by the frightfulness of the thought. "My dancing-boots have one heel off, and Ann is gone out. How in the world will I get it mended?"

"Send it to the cobbler's, of course," said Mattie, serenely, still absorbed by her Moses.

"As if I didn't know that! But did you hear me say that Ann is out, and it is not probable that she will return in time to take it. What can I do?"

Mattie shrugged her shoulders, sublimely indifferent in the possession of sound shoes, but a voice which attracted attention to a window-seat where a trim little figure was seen, said:

"Don't look so thoroughly disconsolate, Alice. I'll take your shoe to the cobbler's for you."

"You?" exclaimed Alice; and even languid Mattie looked up in mild astonishment.

"Yes, I will," replied the voice, which belonged to Janet, the middle sister of the two, who, although neither particularly pretty nor clever, was exceedingly good-natured, as is often the case with such people, and who was also rather independent in her line of conduct.

"Yes, I will," as Alice only looked at her. "Is the undertaking so very difficult that you consider it beyond my ability?"

"No, of course not! How absurd! But do you seriously mean it? Will you really

walk through the heat and dust to the village, and sit in that dirty little shop while my boot is being mended?"

"Certainly. I confess the walk won't be one of the pleasures of life, but I won't mind it; and as for sitting in the dirty shop, I don't think I'll sustain any injury there that soap and water won't repair. But I don't know of any law that compels me to sit there while the work of renovation is going on; and if it is all the same to all concerned, I think I'll employ that time with some business in the village. Get your boot, Alice, and let me be off. Think how terrible it would be if I should get in too late."

"Well, if you will, I suppose you must," said Alice. "And I consider it ungrateful to turn from blessings offered; but remember, I warned you, and I wash my hands from all results."

She left the room for the boot, and in a short time Janet was bearing it towards the village.

Alice had not overrated the toil and pain of the way; and Janet felt herself sadly in want of the revivifying influence of soap and water before she had braved the dingy depths of the proscribed shop. But she did not mind it a whit, and wiped her hot face with vigor and good-nature, as she paused a moment at the door, before entering to execute her commission.

The cobbler was very busy, of course. Cobblers always are; but to oblige the young lady, he would put off some one else, and have the boot done in an hour. And so Janet thanked him with proper humility for his condescension, and left him and the boot, saying that she would return at the expiration of that time.

The business detained her longer than she expected, and the hour was passed by fifteen minutes when she again stood, a great deal hotter, and not quite so good-natured, before the cobbler, who was serenely stitching away on an embossed leather strap. Was the boot done? Of course not. Did a cobbler ever keep his word? Never! And this one was no foe in the fold. "He was very sorry; but a

gentleman had offered to pay him well if he would mend that strap right off. He was a poor man, and he knew that the young lady would not be hard on him for trying to make an honest penny. Just wait a few seconds, and the shoe would be done in a twinkling."

Janet's good-nature did not increase as she listened to the tale; in fact, she felt downright cross, and was strongly inclined to tell the noble votary of Crispin that he had reckoned entirely "without his host." But upon second thought she was convinced that this wouldn't hurry the boot, but would make her a good deal warmer, and she wisely forbore.

The cobbler offered her a rickety stool. She eyed it suspiciously, and turned to the door, but the scorched street and blazing sun were even less attractive, and accepting the stool as the lesser evil, she gathered up her skirts, and, placing it against the opposite wall, she seated herself upon it, to philosophize, and steal what she could of the cobbler's trade while he finished the job.

Alice had not traduced the place in her denunciations. It was both dirty and hot; and the odor of old leather that pervaded it was far from refreshing. The "twinkling," according to natural measurement, passed several times, but still the cobbler stitched grimly on; and Janet was just debating whether to go to sleep or turn sick, when a small earthquake suddenly agitated her stool, and the next second she was striving wildly to swim in an ocean of old boots and shoes, lasts and lapstones. The attempt was a failure; but before she had discovered it, a pair of strong arms lifted her to her feet, and she found herself face to face with six feet of masculine humanity, which was bronzed and bearded in the most approved style, and who exclaimed, eagerly:

"Good heavens, miss! I hope you are not hurt. How could you be so careless as to sit before the door?"

Now Janet wasn't in a state of mind to receive the most gentle rebuke in a spirit of humility, smarting as she did from her bruises, and a half-developed sense of injury, which at this unqualified condemnation from the cause of her disaster, burst into full life.

"Careless, indeed!" she cried, with flashing eyes. "You had better take that

to yourself, for if there is any carelessness in the matter it is on your side. The idea of it! As if it weren't bad enough to be thrown by a great awkward elephant into a heap of dirty old boots and shoes, but I must be accused of carelessness, because I couldn't see through a two-inch plank, and stand humbly out of my lord's path. Careless, indeed! Have you finished that shoe?" And snatching the article more quickly than politely, she stalked out of the shop, before the astonished man could utter either apology or defence.

Janet reached home at a temperature considerably above one hundred. She threw the shoe at Alice, and declining to accept the Winslows' invitation, or to answer any questions regarding her disturbed appearance, she retired to her room.

Alice and Mattie attended the tea-party; and the next day they were enthusiastic in their praises of the lion.

"So handsome! So intellectual and *distingue*! And O Janet, you should have gone, for he is an artist, and paints such beautiful pictures! He has given both the Winslow girls one, and they are exquisite!"

Janet elevated her eyebrows skeptically.

"Women, I suppose, with impossible complexions, in ball dresses of the latest mode; or perhaps children, with crimped hair, staring vacantly at flowers warranted to be genuine French. No, I thank you! The ghosts of the canvas I spoil haunt me constantly, and I don't care to be further harassed by beholding the sins of others."

"Janet, you are incorrigible. But I told him you painted, and he will call soon to see you."

"I am exceedingly sorry, for he will only have his 'trouble for his pains.' I positively decline to know him." And Janet walked out on the lawn, where she stood a short time, and then went slowly back to the house, and up to a little room she called her studio; for Janet, like every child of the Good Father, had received one gift from his hand that gave happiness in itself. Hers was painting, and her soul was wedded to it. She bowed in worship before all that was bright and beautiful, rich colors and delicate tints being to her eye what the full deep chords of melody are to the ear of the musician. As she closed the door of her sanctum behind her the petulant look faded from her face, and a soft radiance spread over it. A fresh un-

finished landscape stood on her easel. She picked up her brush, and put a few strokes on. It did not seem to please her. She tried again, but with no better success; and throwing down her brush, she took a pencil and piece of paper, and began to sketch; carelessly at first, but growing more interested as she went on, till she became completely absorbed in her work. Had any one been there to look over her shoulder, he would have seen growing under her hand the face of the man who brought her to grief in a cobbler's shop.

She worked on it till the likeness stood out bold and clear, and then springing up, she took her landscape from the easel, and replacing it with a smaller canvas, she transferred her sketch to it, after which, as if ashamed of what she had done, she turned the face downward, and left the room, locking the door after her.

Mr. Crane called that afternoon, but Janet had gone to visit a neighbor. In a few days he called again, but Janet locked herself up with her picture, leaving Alice and Mattie to explain her non-appearance as best they could. Two weeks passed. Mr. Crane became a frequent visitor, and talked idle nonsense with her sisters, while up in her studio, Janet saw brown eyes look at her from her canvas more earnestly and tenderly each day, and in looking

back into them forgot all else till one morning, just as the last stroke had been given, and she hung with delight over her finished work, the door flew open, and Effie, her twelve-year-old sister, entered, saying:

"Janet, Mr. Crane is here, and—"

She stopped short, looked at the picture, and then cried:

"Why! Mrs. Crane's likeness! How perfect! I am going to take it down and show it." And before Janet could stop her, she snatched it from the easel, and ran from the room. Janet followed at the top of her speed, but Effie "distanced" her, and she reached the parlor to see her picture held up before the astonished eyes of its original, her enemy of the cobbler's shop!

Janet lived through the scene that followed, as people always do, and a week later she laughed over what she thought so distressing. Mr. Crane continued his visits, but he spent more time in Janet's studio than in the parlor; and before the summer was over, she had formed so high an opinion of him, not only as an artist, but as a man, that she promised to go to Rome with him in the autumn to copy the grand old pictures there. And he says that, though they are all very well in their way, there is not one whose fame would not be dimmed if she would do only one little piece called "In a Cobbler's Shop."

IN A WINE-CELLAR.

BY LOUISE DUPEE.

"No, I never could live here, even for one week," repeated my sister Helena, peering down the dusky winding staircase which led to the cellar with eyes like those of a child who has been listening to ghost stories. "A haunted house is frightful enough, anyway, and this one is especially frightful."

Just then some far-off door opened and closed again with a little slam. No ghostly fingers touched the latch—it was evident enough that it was only the wind that was making itself thus at home in the dreary old mansion, but both mamma and Helena turned white and grasped each other by the arms.

"It is only the wind," said I, who was made of different stuff, laughing a laugh whose cheer seemed to offend the solemn echoes, and they made haste to send it back, connected with something which sounded like a groan. "It is a windy day, you know, and we opened the upper windows."

"I don't believe in haunted houses," said mamma; "but I feel as if there were something uncanny here. It is certainly the dreariest place I ever saw. Ah! it is a great pity that we spent almost our last penny to come over the water. If we had only reached

here before your grandfather died, perhaps—" But her lip trembled so that she could not finish her sentence, and there were tears just ready to fall from her eyes.

"He must have been a thoughtless, cruel old man," said Helena, excitedly. "He knew how poor we were, he knew that we had only our own exertions to depend upon for support, and when he sent for us to come over here did not even send us money to pay our expenses. And now there is nothing for us but this ruinous old house. I wonder if he thought we were going to eat it, or drink it, or what he supposed we were going to do with it. I don't see how he came to give all the land, the parks, the beautiful fields and forests to his wife's relatives, and leave us only this mass of stone and decaying wood. I call it insulting."

"Perhaps he meant to give it all to us," said mamma. "I think he must have, or he never would have sent for us to come here under such circumstances. But he was a very eccentric old man, and unreasonable, your poor father used to say, and he was probably offended because we did not make our appearance at once. I am sure we hurried as fast as we could, though, but it was

sometime before we got all our little stock of household goods exchanged for money." And the memory of these lost treasures brought the tears into her eyes again.

"But grandpa was very rich," said I. "He had money and jewels of great value, every one says, and what disposal he made of them no one knows. Nothing was mentioned in the will but the real estate. I believe that there is another will somewhere—that this is not the true one—and that if we could only find it, we should find ourselves in better keeping than we are now."

"If grandpa had money or jewels not mentioned in the will, I suppose they would be ours wherever we might find them, as we are the only lawful heirs," said Helena, a little ray of hope shining in her eyes.

"Yes," said I, "and I believe that they are concealed somewhere about the house. I am going to search everywhere."

"They may have been stolen," said mamma. "Indeed, I do not see how it could have been otherwise if they were left in the house, for the servants were alone here after your grandfather died."

"Yes, mamma, but English servants are not like American servants, you know, but more like members of the family, long tried and trustworthy. They had probably grown old in grandpapa's service. The two who were here when we came were gray-haired, you know, and they certainly did not have the appearance of thieves. Besides that, if grandpa had wished to conceal anything of value, I think he would have concealed it in the cellar, for the cellar seems to be the part of the house which they consider to be haunted, and judging from what old Thomas told us, a gold mine there would be safe from the invasion of any one in this region. Don't you know he said that he was the only one who dared to go down there after nightfall? But I'm not afraid of ghosts, I'm going to peep into every nook and corner of the dreadful place. I'm even going to explore the old wine-cellar—the very abiding-place of the ghosts, they say."

"Not to-day, Lou, not to-day," said Helena, with a little nervous twitch at my hand. "Let's go back to the inn, I can't endure to stay here any longer. It is a dreary day, and the old house seems less damp, and desolate, and uncanny in the sunshine."

"But I'm impatient. I dreamed last night of finding a room somewhere underground that was paved with golden coins. Who

knows but what it may prove a reality? You need not be afraid, I don't wish you to go with me, I'd much rather go alone, for you'd be sure to get into a panic and think you heard noises and saw strange things, and if a rat should happen to be promenading one of the corridors, which would not be at all unlikely, you would lose your senses with fright. And as for mamma, I can dispense with her company as well. I am sure that neither of you would aid much in the search."

"I would not have you go down there alone for anything," said mamma—she was the most timid little woman alive. "And the idea of finding treasures concealed there is too much like a fairy story. It is too unlikely even to dream of," she added, drawing her shawl about her shoulders, as if making ready to leave the hated house.

"I would not venture down those stairs alone, if I knew that Sinbad's Diamond Valley was shining at the foot," said Helena, emphatically. "Neither shall you, Lou. I should be frightened to death about you."

"Ghosts will not harm any one," said I, laughing at her fears. "I'm not afraid of them in the least. If I should meet one I should say to him '*Bon jour, mon brave!*'" as the youth said to the ghost, in that story in the old French reader we used at school. Then I should go on my way unmindful of his ghostship."

Both mamma and Helena saw fit to reprove me for the light manner in which I spoke of these shadowy gentlemen, though they expressed much unbelief in their existence, and insisted on going back to our quarters in the smoky, uninhabitable little village inn, at once.

"Some other day we will peep into the mysteries; we will find some one to accompany you into that cavern of darkness, the cellar, if you must explore it, Lou," said Helena.

"I don't wish any company," said I, "but I will not go to-day, since you are so much against it. Let us go and call in the artist, and ask him of the sights he has seen, and the noises he has heard since he has taken up his abode in the tower. I want to see that part of our mansion, too. They say that the view from there is remarkable."

"I was thinking of that," said mamma. "He is an American, and it will be delightful to see one of our own country folk, at least. He must be stout-hearted to remain in such a gloomy place."

The tower was built on to a wing of the old house, which was so ruinous that grandpapa had not made use of it for years. The tower itself was in a good condition, however, and had been inhabited by Mr. Edward Marcy—as the name was engraved on the card he left at our door while we were out a few days before—for sometime. Grandpapa took a fancy to the young man, and though he had generally no opinion of strangers, and disliked to have them about, allowed him to take up his abode there. He was anxious to remain there longer if we had no objection to his doing so, and we had none in the least.

We found him at home in a little round room that was almost all windows, and seemed to be an importation from another region, it was so bright, and cheery, and beautiful.

Grandpapa had requested that we should live in the old house, or in the neighborhood of it, as the Moorfields had lived there, one generation after another, for I don't know how many years, and we were the last of the name. We thought it very unreasonable, and were determined to leave the place as soon as we could raise sufficient money to do so. But now, as I looked about me, I began to think that I, at least, had objections to Mr. Marcy's monopoly of the tower, and had packed him off, in my mind, and planned housekeeping arrangements for ourselves in the tiny sky apartments, in a very short space of time. Mamma and Helena, too, looked both surprised and delighted.

"Who would think that this could belong to such a dreary old house? and to look from so high a point the place does not seem so wild and desolate," said mamma, looking from a window which opened across the stretch of level, monotonous moorland, to a range of purple hills, and from behind their softest and airiest curves, rose, as if by magic, the fretted towers of a castle. Through a little opening between the purple peaks, a picturesque church spire pointed, and there were groups of trees and a silver flash somewhere, as if there were a river falling from the hills.

"If this is a wilderness, it is hemmed in by fairyland," said Helena. "I had no idea that it was so lovely up here."

"Then this is the most delightful place imaginable," said Mr. Marcy, laughing, "for fairyland isn't fairyland when you get there, though it does seem to be so from here, and you can be as happy as you please in imagining that you behold it."

"It never is," said Helena, with a little sigh.

"Never!" said he, still smiling, but speaking almost as dolefully as she.

Then he began to talk in an artistic way about the dull neutral tint of the moors being the finest margin possible to set off a picture, and pointed out beautiful views to us from every side; a glimpse of the sea, and soft undulating meadows; an old church, with an ivy-mantled tower, in the midst of weeping willows and quaint sombre-looking yews; a windmill on a breezy hill; picturesque groups of cottages and mossy-roofed old farmhouses, and though there was no sunshine to brighten the scene and they were in the dreary atmosphere of autumn, they were charming beyond measure. Helena was delighted to keep looking and admiring in her dreamy careless way, but mamma was absent-minded, and I was making plans, rather impatient of the artist's lingering on tints, and slopes, and background and foreground. I was in a hurry to ask him about the old house, for he certainly might give us a good deal of information concerning it. We were in too forlorn a condition to be very enthusiastic over either nature or art—alone in a strange country, with scarcely a penny in our pockets, and no friends in either country that we felt free to apply to for aid. But Helena, who liked to, and could, forget her troubles by absorbing her mind in pretty things, fell to talking about the pictures that were scattered about the room, before I could give her a warning glance. And of course, as they were our host's own work, we all must regard and admire them for the sake of politeness. He and Helena seemed to be much interested in each other. She was pretty, with soft hazel eyes, and golden hair, and I caught him stealing a very admiring glance at her face, and was troubled for a moment with a vague fear that they would fall in love with each other. How unfortunate it would be! They were both so poor, and I did not approve of artists, though I loved a fine picture. They seemed to me like an idle, dreamy, vagabond class, always starving in attics. Then it occurred to me, for the first time, to note what manner of man he was, as to personal appearance, and after a satisfactory perusal of his features, forgot his poverty, and his being an artist, and wished they might do so, for he had the nicest face I ever saw. If I was not interested in the pictures or the landscapes, I was in that, and is not a strong, good, beautiful human face more beautiful than anything

else in the world? But I suppose there is no need of my saying so much about that, but I am very much interested in Mr. Edward Marcy now, and love to linger over our first meeting.

At last there was a little pause in the picture talk, and mamma, who was as anxious as myself, seized the opportunity at once to ask him a few questions about grandpapa, and if he knew how the idea that the house was haunted originated. The landlady at the inn had so many stories that one could hardly tell which to believe.

He laughed. "It was gotten up by the servants, in the first place, your father said, and such a superstition will soon spread in a community like this. They tell of strange sounds that have been heard, and strange sights that have been seen here, round the firesides of the cottagers of an evening, I assure you."

"Do you believe in them?" queried mamma, whose very voice had a tremble like fear in it. It was strange that mamma, who was so strong and sensible in every other way, should have been so timid!

"Believe in them? No indeed!" said he, with a little look of surprise. "But they say that years and years ago there was a murder committed in the wine-cellar. Mr. Moorfields did not say anything about it, but old Thomas told me so, and they talk of it in the village. It is barely possible that it is true, but I hardly believe it."

"A murder!" we all exclaimed in a breath, mamma and Helena with very white faces, and I felt a thrill of inexpressible horror, myself. Our landlady had hinted at something of the kind, but we were as much startled as if we had never dreamed of such a thing. We had never allowed ourselves to think of it, and had never mentioned it to each other.

"How thoughtless in me to mention it," said the artist, noting the effect his communication had upon us. But indeed, I do not believe one word of it. Your grandfather pooh-poohed at the story, and laughed because he could not bribe one of the servants to go into the cellar at all, with the exception of old Thomas. It was very annoying to him, but still he could not help laughing at their ridiculous superstition. I have been down there sometimes to bring wine for him myself, when Thomas was otherwise engaged."

"And did you see nothing?" asked Helena, breathlessly.

"Nothing but shadows, and cobwebs, and stone walls, and shelves filled with bottles of the rarest old wines that glittered like diamonds when I held my lamp near them."

"And have you never heard any strange noises about the house at night?" said Helena. "Our landlady told us that the inmates of the house were often kept awake all night by the groans and screams that echoed through the passage ways from every direction. Old Thomas was rather mysterious about it, but gave it as his opinion that there was no part of the house uncanny but the cellar."

"The wind makes strange noises about the house," said he. "It is astonishing how it gets into a ruinous old building like this, wherever it is situated, and here on the border of the moor it has a particularly dreary sound, not unlike that of a human voice in distress sometimes. And when it is not very high but comes creeping almost noiselessly over the heath, when it gets within the echoing walls of the house it makes a low hollow moaning. I am often almost persuaded myself that the sound proceeds from somewhere underground."

"But what about the murder, Mr. Marcy? Who was murdered, and by whom, and when?"

Mr. Marcy looked at Helena, who was fairly trembling, and hesitated. But from the very fact that she was so terror-stricken, the mystery of the murder was most fascinating to her, and she begged him to relate the story.

"It is not as if we were going to live there," said she. "I would not hear it for anything in that case."

"If there ever was a murder there, it happened so many years ago that no one seems to know exactly who was murdered. One has one story concerning it, and another another. Old Thomas says that two brothers of the Moorfield family fell in love with the same young lady, and grew fiercely jealous of each other; so much so, that at last, in a fit of passion, one stabbed the other to the heart with a hunting-knife, and concealed his body under the floor of the wine-cellar, where it remained years without being discovered. There is a sort of cave under it now, they say, but I have examined it, and could not discover anything of the kind. It is a solid brick floor, and looks perfectly innocent in every respect."

"How could grandpapa have lived here so

many years?" said Helena, shuddering. "Are you never afraid yourself, Mr. Marcy? To be sure, this wing seems quite cheerful and pleasant—very unlike the main house, with that dreadful place underneath; but it is so lonely, so near to—"

"Helena is afraid even to mention the wine-cellar," said I, laughing, as she paused, leaving her sentence unfinished. "But I have a great curiosity to see it. I am going to explore the whole cellar some day. There are ever so many queer nooks in it, they say. One might find treasures there."

"O, it is pretty much like the underground portion of all very old English mansions," said he; "damp, and dark, and mouldy as a tomb, and inhabited by ancient and numerous families of rats. I have been there in the dark, but heard no ghostly footfall behind me, and saw nothing startling but a little ray of light that had crept down from some crevice in the floors overhead. That did startle me a little at first, I confess, for old Thomas had always been telling me of seeing a spectral lamp moving about in the darkness as if carried by some unseen hand. It was supposed that the murdered man had a lamp in his hand at the time of his death, and that his ghost was still promenading with it up and down the passage way, pausing at the door of the wine-cellar. But I soon discovered the chink overhead, and tried to convince Thomas, afterwards, that his spectral lamp was nothing supernatural."

"Probably all their dreadful stories are just as groundless," said I. "But you did have an idea that there was something in there, Mr. Marcy, or you would not have taken pains to go down there in the dark?"

"I did after your grandfather's death, for Thomas said that during his whole sickness he seemed to have the wine-cellar on his mind, and when he was not quite himself he talked about it continually.

"But it does not seem strange that his mind should have dwelt upon it, for it must have annoyed him very much so have the old homestead, which he prized so highly, so shunned and dreaded as a haunted house, though, to be sure, it was only thus shunned by ignorant people. He was very sensitive about it, and the day before he died he sent for me, and requested that I should take the keys of the house after his funeral, and made me promise solemnly that I would deliver them to no other hands save yours, and that I should allow no one to enter the house

until you came, under any pretext whatever. I wondered at this, for his wife's nephew was with him—the one to whom he bequeathed this estate—and he seemed quite offended that his uncle should have done so. After the old gentleman's death he came to me and demanded the keys, saying that he had left something in the house which belonged to him, and when I refused to give them up he was very angry. He said that his uncle was not in his right mind when he gave me such a charge, and I had no right whatever to keep the keys. But I was quite sure that the old gentleman was in his right mind, and when I remembered his solemn earnestness, I would not have let them go out of my hands for worlds. And I gathered from his manner, though he did not once mention his nephew's name, that it was he whom he wished to exclude from the house in particular, he placed such particular stress on the words any one. 'Don't let any one come into the house on any pretext whatever,' he said. I always noticed that he seemed to dislike this man, and wondered that he should have made him heir to so large an estate. It isn't particularly valuable though, the land is barren and unproductive. Not long before you arrived here he came again, and attempted to get possession of the keys, but in a different manner. He tried the art of coaxing this time, and was very quiet and gentlemanly until he saw that he was likely to fail in his purpose; then he threatened me all sorts of things, and said that the law could compel me to open the doors. But it seems he did not resort to the law, for I have not seen him in this neighborhood since. If he was in such haste to obtain what he left in the house I should think he would come now and do so. I took pains to send him information of your arrival."

"Ah," thought I, "it is no longer such a mystery where grandpapa's missing wealth has gone. This nephew knows of its whereabouts. But how strange that he should have such a desire to get into the forlorn empty old house." Then it came over me with a new force that there were treasures concealed there. "Grandpapa hid them to keep them out of his way, and he suspected it."

We were so interested in Mr. Marcy's conversation that we took no heed no time, and it was nearly dark before we knew it. Then we took our leave, reluctantly, and he insisted on escorting us home through the little footpath across the heath.

I could scarcely sleep at all that night, my mind was so full of what I had heard, and when I did sleep it was a feverish sleep full of strange visions.

The next morning mamma was unwell, and Helena remained at home to care for her; but I was impatient to go to town and have an interview with Mr. Townly, who had been grandpapa's lawyer, and knew more about his private affairs than any one else, we were informed. So I took the early train, and found the gentleman without any trouble. He was a kindly but shrowd-looking old gentleman, and seemed as much puzzled as myself as to the state of affairs regarding grandpapa's property, so he could not give me very much information.

"Your grandfather was a very eccentric old gentleman, as you probably know, my dear," said he, "and then, for some time before his death, his mind seemed to be wandering. I cannot imagine how he disposed of his money, but I know that he had a great deal to dispose of. I am sure of one other thing also, and that is that he did not spend it. He was inclined to be miserly in his later years—a propensity not uncommon with the aged—and seemed to imagine continually that something was slipping from his grasp. He told me that everybody was trying to cheat him, and that he was going to change all his lands, with the exception of Moorfields—into gold. He did not ask my advice on the subject, but did so at once. He was always very secretive, and none save myself knew anything of his private affairs. As his lawyer, I was, of course, made acquainted with them in a measure. I am positive that his mind was not sound when he dictated this last will. He declared that he had nothing to dispose of but the Moorfield estate; and the lands he gave to his wife's nephew, Mr. Samuel Jaffrey, who was with him at the time, leaving the house to you and your sister. It is very evident that he did not intend to leave anything to Jaffrey, but that in this weak wandering state of mind, he was persuaded to do so by this not over-scrupulous gentleman. When I last saw him, a day or two before his death, all that seemed alive in him was his dislike to Jaffrey, and it is my opinion that he concealed the gold in some place where it will not be very easily found; through fear that in some way he would get it into his hands."

He did not seem to think it very strange that grandpapa should have been so anxious

that no one should be admitted into the house after his death, because he never liked to have strangers inspecting his things, never liked to have even the doctor in his sleeping-room, and would often close the doors on his old friends. While he was ill he objected to any one's crossing the moor in front of the house, though it was some distance away, and bade old Thomas order the villagers to go the other way. He even had his bed moved near the window, so that he could see if they obeyed.

"If you were to dispute the will you would undoubtedly recover the Moorfields property," said he. "It belongs to you, certainly. I remember that your grandfather told me, some years ago, that all his possessions would go to his grandchildren in America when he died. You are the only legal heirs, and it is well known that his wife's relations were never favorites with him."

Then he dismissed me, before I was nearly ready to go, saying that he had an engagement which he must attend to at once. But he promised to come to Moorfields the next day, and see what could be done, and assured me that he should be very happy to render me all the assistance possible. But he did not know what a forlorn state we were in, or he must have exhibited even more interest than he did. I began to realize it more and more, however, as I walked wearily back to the station. Then it came over me with new force that the gold was concealed in the house, and that I should find it there. It was only four by the little clock on the village church when I arrived at Moorfields. I did not expect to be there so soon. When I left home I told mamma that it wasn't likely that I should come until the evening train, as I might have some trouble in finding Mr. Townly, and there was no certainty then that I should be able to see him at once. I might remain in town over night, if I were not able to see him to-day, as a daughter of old Thomas, who lived there, had invited me to come and see her repeatedly. She was a good soul, and the wife of a respectable baker, so mamma expressed no objection to my spending the night at her house, if occasion required. As I walked up the little footpath across the moor it occurred to me that it would be a good time to look over the old house a little now, as mamma would not be expecting me home. It was a bright sunshiny afternoon, and it looked really pleasant around there. There were some bright

autumnal flowers on the lawn beside the front entrance, and some one—Mr. Marcy, doubtless—had set the fountain to playing in the little green courtyard. Fortunately I had the key to the front door in my pocket, and opening it very softly—for some way I felt as if mamma and Helena would hear me and disapprove, though they were quite a half mile away in the village inn—I stole into the great sombre old hall. It did not seem half so desolate and dreary within as it did on the day before. We left the shutters open, and the sun was streaming in in a golden flood quite across the drawing-room, bringing out every bright tint in the faded pictures, and glancing brightly on the long mirrors and their quaint tarnished frames. The wind was high, and the shutters were creaking, and dead vine tendrils tapping on the window panes, but it was a brisk ringing, not a slow moaning wind, and made no ghostly sounds about the house. I thought of the murder, but was not afraid even to explore the wine-cellar, and fearing that my courage might fail me if I waited—for I was less brave since I had heard Mr. Marcy's story—I determined to go at once. I had no lamp, but there was a tall wax candle in a silver candlestick on the library table, and lighting that—and a ghostly light enough it was—I crept with it down the creaking staircase. I found the cellar, to say the least, not a cheerful place. It smelled of a fresh earthy mould, like a churchyard. The floor was damp and slippery, and echoed with a heavy clang at my every footfall. The light revealed mysterious-looking nooks and narrow passage ways which seemed to lead into still blacker darkness on every hand. But I heard no strange sounds, saw no strange sights, and after opening door after door, and peering through I don't know how many dreadfully empty, dreadfully still rooms, I came at last to the wine-cellar.

I felt sure that it was the wine-cellar before I opened the door, I don't know why, unless it was because it was so remote, at the end of the longest, and narrowest, and most ghostly walk, and there was a mysterious, uncanny look about the door, my imagination, probably, but so much so that I hesitated to turn the rusty key in the lock, and when I had done so was half afraid to lift the latch and look into the apartment. One glance showed me that it was the wine-cellar, for the candle-rays fell among wine bottles, and they flashed. I don't know what induced

me to do so—I suppose that it was fate, however—but I closed the door after me with a sudden bang, and then, with ears that tingled with dismay, heard the lock spring, and realized that I was fastened into the haunted room. I don't think I ever felt such a sinking of the heart before, for I knew that unless I was strong enough to break the lock—and that was unlikely—I should be compelled to stay there, I dared not think how long. I might scream until I was hoarse, but Mr. Marcy would not be able to hear me in his far away tower, and it was not at all probable that any one would come into the house that day, or even on the morrow.

I was neither imaginative nor timid, in the least, generally, but I can never describe the feeling that came over me when I looked about my prison, and for a few moments my limbs were so palsied with fear that I made no attempt to liberate myself. I could have sworn that I saw some uncanny object moving in one shadowy corner. Now and then when the beams of the light wavered across the wall with a quick stealthy motion, I fancied that it was the brush of some ghostly garment, and my eyes would search the floor for that dreadful trap-door where the murdered man had been concealed, in spite of myself; and suddenly there was a dreadful hollow ring on the pavement behind me, which caused the blood to curdle in my veins. I gave one shrill shriek of despair, which echoed fearfully through the empty passage ways, and pressed my hands to my eyes, that I might not see the fearful thing that had made the sound, and stood perfectly still, imagining that I felt cold, but strangely light hands on my shoulder, and that there were unintelligible whispers from breathless lips falling into my ear. There was a sort of confused rushing sound in my head, and I felt a sudden chill, as if something very cold were close beside me. I stood thus as long as I could endure it, and then with a feeling of desperation I opened my eyes. But no ghastly face confronted me; and when I gathered sufficient strength to look behind me I discovered the cause of the dreadful ring on the floor. One of the large steel hair pins with which I fastened my back hair had fallen out!

I regarded this purely providential, for it quite cured me of my fear, though it caused me to suffer so keenly at the time. I was downright angry with myself for having allowed so slight a thing to send such thrills

of terror through me. "None of their ghostly sights and sounds amount to anything more, and I will be a fool no longer," I said to myself.

But the prospect of remaining there all night, and perhaps much longer, was not much more cheerful, and I quite forgot that I was searching for hidden treasures. I pounded and pushed against the door until I was entirely exhausted, but it was all of no avail, for the lock was strong, and I was almost as slight and small as a child, and had very little strength. But my lungs were strong, and I screamed frantically until my breath failed me. Only the echoes answered me, however, and the wind which had grown higher filled up the pauses with a cry that seemed to triumph over my misery. It must have been uncommonly high, or I should not have heard it so distinctly under ground. Then I stopped to take a little rest, and was able to look about me quite calmly. I tried to divert my mind from the terrors of my situation in every way possible, and was successful in an extraordinary degree, it seems to me now. Many of the shelves which were ranged about the wall were still filled with wine bottles. I brushed the dust off them with my handkerchief, and watched the sparkle of the wine in the candlelight. That part of the tomblike room, at least, was brilliant and gay, and the wine was more suggestive of festal scenes than of the gloomy haunts of ghosts. There was wine of every tint and every variety. I had never seen such a collection before; some of the richest gold, as if the sunshine of southern summers had melted into the grapes, and still glistened in their juice; some tawny, but with a crimson light in it, like the cheeks of the Tuscan girls whose fingers were colored with its flow at the vintages, perhaps a hundred years ago. Some flashing with the color and splendor of rubies, some purple with the over-ripeness of rich Oriental lands.

For a few moments I was entirely absorbed and delighted in contemplating their splendor, and arranged the different bottles as I would have done a bouquet of flowers, bringing the colors which harmonized best together. Then the dreary isolated feeling came over me anew, but not the terror, and I felt the chill of the damp suffocating atmosphere more and more. I made one more desperate attempt to burst open the door, but it gave no sign of yielding to my efforts. Then I exercised my lungs again in the

wildest manner, and as a last resort took a piece of wood which I found upon the floor, and pounded against the ceiling with all my might. Every echo in the deserted old building was awakened, and if the wind had not been shaking the loose shutters, and uttering its now complaining cries in Mr. Marey's neighborhood, I think he must have heard me, though his wing was quite on the other side of the house. I thought that if he were at home he must hear me, so deafening was the noise I raised, and persevered in my pounding until my arms refused to move any longer, and I was ready to slink to the floor with weariness. But none came to my relief, and I was beginning to despair. It was half past seven o'clock by my watch, and I knew that night had already settled on the dreary moors without, and though it was no darker in my prison, it seemed more fearful to think that it was night. I sat down on a thing which looked more like a trestle to put coffins on than anything else. It was all there was there that would serve for a seat, and the floor was so damp and cold that I preferred it to that. I was growing nervous again, and now a new terror had taken possession of me. Was it not the strangest thing in the world that there should be a spring-lock on that door? Was it a spring-lock? Did not some unseen hand turn the key? I fancied when I came along the passage way that I heard the rustling of garments behind me. The candle was growing less and less; it would soon be gone entirely, and I should be left in total darkness. My teeth chattered both with cold and fear, but still I was not so terror-stricken as I had been at first. I had little spasms of horror, then I subsided into something like calmness again. I arose from my seat at last with a flush of desperate determination. Now that I was in the mysterious haunted room, I would look about me and know what was there. Who knew but what I should find the missing money?

So in the first place I examined every mouldy brick in the floor, felt of them to see if some of them might not be loose, and stamped upon them to see where they sounded most hollow, for if there was a trap down there it was covered now by the pavement. But they were all firmly cemented together, and looked as if they had been so for ages. Then I examined the wall. It was built mostly of stone, solid and impenetrable, but on one side where the wine bottles still re-

mained upon the shelves, nearly hiding it from floor to ceiling, I discovered that it was of brick, and looked dilapidated and crumbling. I moved the bottles and looked at it very closely; poked my fingers into the crevices, and peered behind every dusty old shelf. But I had wearied myself so in my frantic efforts for freedom that I was obliged to pause in my search, and, without replacing the bottles, sank down to rest again. It was now past nine o'clock, and, in spite of the unpleasantness of my situation, I felt drowsy, and closing my eyes leaned back against the wall. I don't know how long I remained thus, but I was aroused at length by the feeling that there was something moving on the opposite side of the cellar. I could not hear anything, and my eyes were closed, so of course I could not see anything. I opened them slowly and cautiously, and saw myself, surely myself and no other, though I had fondly imagined that it was myself who was sitting calmly on the trestle, or whatever it might have been, in the corner, standing beside the wine shelves! How could it be? Was I dead, and was that my ghost? Or was I who sat on the trestle the ghost? Or was it my double? I had heard of persons seeing their doubles, but never gave the least credit to such stories. I noticed that I who was standing by the wine shelves had a large rent in my dress on the side, and I who sat on the trestle examined my dress to see if the rent were there in the same place. It was, though I was not aware of it before. I must have torn it since morning, for it was whole when I put it on.

I stood as if in deep and perplexed thought for a moment, rubbing my forehead in a quick jerking way, as if to aid my faculties by that means, a trick of mine which Helena always laughed at. But now I was beginning to move one of the shelves from its place on an iron bracket in the corner. Quickly and eagerly I worked, and after I had moved all the bottles from the shelf in question to the one above it, I pushed it from its resting-place on the bracket, and that end of it fell to the floor. Then, with hands that fairly trembled as if from eager impatience, I pulled at a brick which seemed to be fixed very solidly in the wall, but which after a little effort I succeeded in loosening, and at last it came out in my hands. Then I pulled at another, and another, and they fell also; and then with a loud cry of joy I who sat on the trestle saw a large box which looked as if it

were made of iron, in the hands of my other self, and we both exclaimed in one voice and in one breath, "The jewels! The gold!"

Then the sound of a door opening and closing with a loud noise over my head startled me to my feet, and I cried out, hardly knowing why I did so, in a shrill terrified voice. The candle had gone out, and, groping in the darkness towards the door, I fell, and knew no more until I found myself lying on a sofa in the library up stairs, with Mr. Marcy's face full of anxiety and bewilderment bending over me.

"Where is the box?" I exclaimed, starting up. "I knew all the time that I should find the money, and I am sure that it is there, though I did not see into the box. I did not open it!"

He looked more and more bewildered. "I would keep quiet a while, if I were you," he said, in a soothing tone. "I am glad you are better."

"But how came I here? I was in the wine-cellar," said I, my mind becoming clearer.

"Yes, you fastened yourself in, I suppose. Your grandfather had a spring lock put on to the door not long before he died, because he was afraid that Thomas would forget to lock it, but the key has been in the lock usually, I think. But how long were you in there, Miss Moorfield? Did anything happen to you? I found you lying insensible upon the floor."

"Anything happen to me? no, yes. I found a box hidden in the wall, at the corner where one of the shelves was fastened," I said.

Then I thought over my strange experience, and was a little frightened, and my head felt giddy, and I was cold and so weary that I could hardly hold my head up; but everything was so vivid that it did not occur to me that I might have been dreaming.

He expressed surprise, but I do not remember what he said—indeed, I did not heed it. He told me afterwards that he thought I had been frightened out of my senses.

"Didn't you see the box, Mr. Marcy? It must have been left in the cellar. If you would be so very kind as to go and get it for me—I can't rest until I see its contents—I should be thankful indeed. Then I must go home to the inn, for it must be very late."

He went, but came back without the box, and regarded me with new anxiety.

I was so grievously disappointed that the

tears came into my eyes. "Couldn't you find it? but you saw the hole in the wall where it was hidden, and the fallen shelf?"

"No," he saw nothing of the kind. None of the shelves were disturbed, but the bottles were heaped together rather confusedly. "Haven't you been dreaming?" he asked. "It was a dreadful place to be imprisoned!"

Then I gathered sufficient strength to relate my experience, and after a while began to realize that I had been dreaming, and was ashamed of my folly. The effort of talking thoroughly roused me, and I could see plainly what a fool I had made of myself. What would Mr. Marcy think? And somehow I cared more for what he would think than of what mamma and Helena would think, though I knew that Helena would laugh at me, for I had always prided myself on being both brave and sensible.

But he was very sympathetic, and seemed much interested in my story. And the more I thought of it I felt convinced in my own mind, that, if it were only a dream, there was yet something hidden in that place, if not the gold and jewels.

"It was fortunate that you left the front door ajar, for it was by that means I found you," said he. "I noticed that it was so when I came home from the village, about six o'clock, and thought that you, and your mother and sister were probably in the house. But I heard no sound, and, as it grew later, saw no light in the house, and I knew that no one had passed out at the gate, for I can see every one who does pass out, at my window; and I was sitting there in the moonlight. Then I thought that you must have left it open by mistake, and thought I would close it before I retired. So, about ten o'clock, I came down to do so, taking a lamp with me. And just as I had closed the door, and turned to go back again, I heard a loud cry from the direction of the cellar, and hurried toward that ghostly region as fast as I could. I was thinking that there might be something in old Thomas's fearful stories, after all, when to my amazement and alarm I found you lying at my feet, when I opened the door of the wine-cellar."

"Who can tell how long I might have been imprisoned there, if it had not been for that?" I said, with a shudder. "Perhaps you saved my life, Mr. Marcy."

Great was the surprise of my mother and sister, when, after rousing the landlord of the inn, I walked into their room at midnight, as

pale as a ghost, and utterly exhausted. But I begged to be asked no questions until morning, and they kindly forbore to question me. I was really ill, but something happened in the morning that fully repaid me for my suffering. Before I had awakened from my feverish sleep Mr. Marcy appeared at the inn, and wished to see me. He had been thinking of my strange dream until he was impelled by curiosity to go into the wine-cellar and move the shelf, which I saw myself move in the dream. It was no easy matter, he said, for it was fastened unnecessarily strong; but he accomplished it at last, and proceeded to search for the mysterious opening in the wall. It seemed solid, and the bricks looked as if they were cemented together very firmly; but after examining it closely he discovered that in one place it looked as if it might have been recently mended. The mortar was of a lighter color, and the bricks less mouldy. Not without a great effort, and many misgivings, he tore it away, and there, in a little recess, on reaching in, he found an iron box securely locked. He had not opened it, but awaited our permission to do so. Mamma grew very pale; Helena sobbed with excitement, and I—well, I had been through so much that I hardly knew how I felt; but I was just as sure that the box contained the missing gold and jewels, as I was when it was opened and I saw them in a glittering heap before my eyes. I think that Mr. Marcy was, too; and he seemed so glad—as glad almost as if they were his own. He was poor, also; not as poor as we—a man can take care of himself so much better than poor helpless women—but he knew what a joy and relief it must be to us, who were alone in a strange country, our only possession an old crazy, haunted house. We wept over the hundreds and hundreds of golden coin; and Helena, with the jewel-casket in her hands, added plentifully to the clusters of diamonds with her teardrops. Yesterday we were beggars, to-day we were rich. In that shining heap we saw home, and friends, and freedom. No more tolling up other people's stairs for us now.

Mr. Townly came to Moorfields that day, as he had promised to do, but we did not need his assistance then. He, too, seemed delighted with our good-fortune, and we and our two friends had a merry dinner together. He did not think it worth the while to dispute grandpapa's will, but was quite willing that Mr. Jaffreys should enjoy the possession

of Moorfields. But we all love the old house now, and my husband, Mr. Marcy, and I spend some months there every year. We have had it thoroughly repaired, so that there is no trace of unwholesome decay about it, and every ghost is banished. And we have learned for a certainty that there was no murder committed in the wine-cellar; only a quarrel between the two brothers, by means of which one was wounded severely by a knife in the hands of the other. But he lived, and married his sweetheart, the cause of the quarrel, not long afterwards.

But I cannot help feeling an aversion to the place to this day, though it was there that I not only found the hidden gold, but, according to Mr. Marcy, I found love there too. He is positive that he fell in love with me at the moment he found me lying insensible on the floor. Truly it was a haunted place, and sometimes I cannot believe that I was dreaming when I saw myself discover the mysterious iron box.

IN SEARCH OF NUMBER FOUR.

BY MRS. R. B. EDSON.

MRS. STEPHEN BRASHER number three was dead, and Mr. Brasher was heart-broken. He was reported to have nearly fainted away at the funeral, by certain people, who, having a passion for such occasions, attended as usual, to take notes and report upon the conduct of the friends. This proved to be a more than ordinarily satisfactory occasion. Mr. Brasher "took on" enough to satisfy the most exacting, and everybody was delighted with him.

For fully four weeks Mr. Brasher went about with a very dejected air, speaking only in monosyllables, and nursing a slight cough, which he often declared would "soon send him to rejoin his dear Belinda Jane." Everybody felt pleased—at his devotion, not at the prospect of his prophecy being fulfilled—except the relatives of his two former wives. To their minds, it would have looked better, under the circumstances, if he hadn't mentioned names.

At the end of the four weeks above-mentioned Mr. Brasher began to pick up. He was observed to smile, in a deprecating way, when sympathetic friends admonished him that "it was every one's duty to look after their health, and to be willing to live out their allotted days upon the earth."

One heartless wretch gave it as *his* opinion, that "Brasher's health should be looked after by the State, as in the present feminine surplus, a man of his characteristics was invaluable in the community." But everybody knew it was sheer envy that prompted this remark, for this fellow, alas! never had a wife at all—had not poor Will Thornton.

Soon after this the advertising columns of the Primrose Eagle contained the following:

"Wanted, by a middle-aged man of good habits, a boarding place, where he can have the comforts of a home. A cheerful household, where there are young ladies preferred, as the advertiser is in depressed spirits, and it is necessary for his health that he have cheerful company and surroundings. A note addressed to 'B.,' Eagle Office, will reach the advertiser."

Perhaps I might as well state that Primrose was a city of some ten or twelve thousand inhabitants, according to the census; but according to its own estimated importance it rivalled London, Paris, and even the celestial Peking. It had, indeed, grown up rapidly, and like ambitious childhood, was pleased about it. Of course, to grow rapidly, a town must have enterprising manufactories; for, contemptuously as certain classes may look upon the men who do the world's

work—who fashion into forms of usefulness and beauty the crude substances of the earth—they are, nevertheless, the vital current that throbs and pulses through the world's great veins and arteries, and without which it has no fresh life and growth.

Primrose, therefore, was a manufacturing town; and, as such, afforded a good field for boarding-house enterprise. Among the competitors who had entered said field was Mrs. Eudora Greenwood. Mrs. Eudora was, moreover, a widow—a nice, sensible, energetic woman, worth nine hundred and ninety-nine of those women who, when left to their own resources—and sometimes when they are not—marry the first man they can lay hands on for a home—a support.

It was a marvel how Frederic Greenwood ever came to marry so sensible and practical a girl as Eudora Brent—or, rather, it was a marvel that a girl like Eudora Brent should marry such a weak milk-and-waterish fellow as young Greenwood. Mr. Greenwood was a member of the legal profession; and wore lavender kids and eye-glasses, and carried a cane. I don't think of anything else about him worthy of mention, except, perhaps, a carefully-nursed mustache of pale amber, to which he was greatly attached, and to which he gave all his best and deepest thoughts. He had an abundance of time to do this, as he wasn't particularly troubled with "briefs." Occasionally, to be sure, he had some little two-penny job, as for instance: Pat Mulligan brandishes his shillalah uncomfortably near the ears of his "neighbor from over the Rhine," Carl Blitzenburghenheimer, and he sits on the case; or, somebody walks deliberately and with malice prepense through somebody else's backyard, and keeps doing it, till he is sued for deadlly and diabolical trespass, etc., etc. These had been the great, and profound, and weighty matters of the law which had lifted F. Greenwood, Esquire, above the common herd.

But death, it is said, loves a shining mark, and so, one day, the grim archer let fly an arrow at this brilliant legal light and embryo judge.

While her husband lived, Eudora had all she could do to "keep up appearances." The thousands who have tried it know just what hard wearing work this is. Left to herself, her natural independenece asserted itself. She sold off some few superfluities which had been necessary as stage adjuncts in the farce she had been playing for the last

three or four years, hired a house in a good locality for that purpose, and taking her two young sisters to assist her, opened a boarding-house.

And here, among other places, came the Primrose Eagle containing "B.'s advertisement. Now it so happened that Mrs. Greenwood had one pleasant vacant room, suitable for a single gentleman or lady, which she was thinking of advertising, as, having to pay high rent, it was desirable to utilize all the room.

Mrs. Greenwood had been thinking about asking her boarders, of whom she had fifteen, if they knew any one who would like such a room as she had to offer, but she naturally shrank from doing it, especially since Mr. Thornton, a new boarder, had related a story of a former landlady of his whom he soberly avowed furnished every boarder with a paper, headed with a flattering advertisement of her house, to "solicit recruits," as he phrased it.

Mrs. Eudora had got past the crape and bombazine period of grief, and indulged a little, in a quiet way, in colors. This particular afternoon that I am going to tell you about, she had on a soft-tinted lilac serge, trimmed with folds of purple gros grain. She had one of those clear complexions which these colors become, and, taken altogether, was a very pleasant picture to contemplate as she sat leaned back in a pretty easy-chair of pale green rep, in the sunny little parlor of her boarding-house, her bright clear gray eyes running up and down the columns of the Primrose Eagle.

"Girls, here is just the man I want!" she cried, delightedly. "I must send a note to him at once."

Nora and Susie Brent exchanged glances, and Sue said, coolly:

"A personal, eh?"

Mrs. Greenwood's face grew instantly grave, though she did blush faintly. "Girls! how can you?" said she, reproachfully. "It is the man for the east chamber, I mean. See here."

Susie took the paper and read the advertisement aloud, and then she and Nora laughed softly.

"I should say this old party has an excellent and discriminating taste, Dora," said Sue. "'A cheerful household, where there are young ladies preferred!' That means us, certainly, Nora. Write him a note, by all means, Dora. I'll wager my curls"—which,

considering they cost her ten dollars, was no inconsiderable pledge—"that it is some old widower in pursuit of his ninety-ninth wife."

"Susan Brent, I am ashamed of you!" said Mrs. Greenwood, severely. "I dislike, above all things, to see young girls' first thought in relation to a gentleman be something in regard to marriage. This person is very evidently out of health, bodily and mentally, and to recover the tone of his mind has been advised to mingle naturally and freely in lively cheerful society. The wording of the advertisement—'where he can have the comforts of a home'—prove this. I hope he isn't so much of an invalid that he would find going up two flights of stairs an objection."

"You might have an elevator put in for his accommodation, Eudora," interrupted Sue; "or you might put him up a cot here in the parlor."

"I fear the latter arrangement might interfere with Mr. Siddons's pleasure," Mrs. Eudora retorted, maliciously.

Sue colored vividly at this nice little thrust from her sister, but she replied, promptly:

"So it might—also with Mr. Thornton's newspaper reading. You will have to fall back on the elevator, my dear Mrs. Greenwood."

"How ridiculous you talk, Susan!" Mrs. Greenwood exclaimed, in a vexed tone. She always said "Susan" when she was vexed.

"I wouldn't mind her, Eudora," said pretty quiet-faced Nora. "It is Sue's way. I dare say she is quite nervous now at the possibility that some one else will get in ahead of us and secure this 'middle-aged gentleman of good habits.' I shouldn't wonder if he was some benevolent old fellow—rich and eccentric, you know—in search of—"

"The man of Sin," interrupted Sue, *sotto voce*. Sue had been to hear Nabby.

"Some sweet-tempered, unselfish, simple-hearted and unsophisticated young girl to adopt and make his heiress," continued Nora, not noticing Susie's interruption save by a reproving frown.

"Upon second thought, Dora, I believe you had better carry out your first intention, and send him a note at once," Sue cried, with a ludicrous show of interest and anxiety.

"I fully intend to, Miss Impertinence," she responded, rising and going out to procure writing materials.

"Supposing your hypothesis to be correct,

my sweet sister, how do you suppose I would suit the benevolent old party alluded to?" asked Sue, solemnly, of Nora.

"Better ask how you would suit if *yours* was correct," retorted Nora, laughing.

"I'll tell you what, Nora," Sue cried, with sudden animation, "if he is a widower, let's make a match between him and Miss Spencer. Just imagine her in white satin and orange blossoms!"

The two girls broke into little soft peals of laughter, in the midst of which the doorbell rang, and almost immediately Sphinx, their own chore-girl and maid-of-all-work, opened the parlor door and ushered in a gentleman—a gentleman in glossy black, with a band of crape a finger and a half deep on the shining beaver he held in his hand.

"I called to see about getting board," he said, with a bow and a smile towards each of the young ladies.

"I will speak to Mrs. Greenwood, sir," said Nora, going towards the door. "I am not sure there is a vacancy."

"I shall be greatly disappointed if there is not," he said, with a gallant—or what was undoubtedly meant for that—inclination of his head towards Miss Susie.

"Disappointments are the common lot of mortals," said Sue, sententiously.

"Ah yes! I know it only too well," he responded, glancing significantly at the crape on his hat, and sighing decorously, but in neither an altogether hopeless nor dejected manner.

Just then Mrs. Greenwood made her appearance, looking slightly flushed and annoyed. Mrs. Eudora Greenwood was a very fine-looking woman, and just now the color in her cheeks and the darkening and changeful light in her great gray eyes made her look unusually well.

"Have I the honor of seeing Mrs. Greenwood—Mrs. Eudora Greenwood?" asked the strange gentleman, politely, rising and taking a step forward, and involuntarily holding his hat, with its telltale badge, behind him.

Mrs. Greenwood bowed rather stiffly, and waited further communication.

"I wish to get a room, with board, madam," he continued, a little embarrassed by her manner. "Is there a vacancy in your establishment?"

"I—I don't know as there is, really," she replied, hesitatingly, thinking of the note to "B." lying signed and sealed on her dressing-table.

The man's face lengthened visibly, and he brought the hand which held the hat round and crossed it over the other, and put on a very touching expression, as he said:

"Every hope I have crumbles into dust at my touch."

"'Twas ever thus—from childhood's hour
I've seen my fondest hopes decay,"

Sue whispered in an aside to Nora, as the two stood together by the window.

"I was," he went on, "so sure that this was just the place for my health"—here he coughed dejectedly behind his hand—"both on account of location and society. My physician, madam, recommended my mixing in cheerful company, in fact, to find a boarding-place where there were young people—" glancing half round at Sue and Nora—"and where I could mingle in the family, could, in fact, enjoy the comforts of a home."

A sudden light dawned on Mrs Greenwood's mind.

"Have you advertised in the Eagle, sir?" she asked.

"I have, madam. But some one to-day recommended your place as just meeting my needs, and I came up at once. I am so sorry I am too late."

"Stay! I will be frank with you, Mr. —"

"Brasher," he supplied, his face lighting.

"Well, Mr. Brasher, if you are the 'B.' here referred to," taking the Primrose Eagle from the table, "I think I can accommodate you—that is, if you like the room I can give you."

"I assure you I should like any room in this house, my dear madam," he replied, gallantly. "Yes, that is my advertisement; what were you going to remark concerning it?"

"I had just written a note in answer to it. I had a vacant room, and thought it might suit the advertiser. If you please, I will send my girl up to show it to you."

Mr. Brasher did please, and Sphinx was accordingly summoned, and despatched at once to the east chamber, to exhibit its merits and resources to its would-be occupant.

"Do you think your invalid with 'depressed spirits' can manage those two flights with only Sphinx's assistance, Dora?" asked Sue, the moment the door closed on him.

"My curls are safe enough! Didn't you see the crape on his hat? I always thought I had the spirit of prophecy. I declare, Dora! it was worth five dollars to see the change

that came over the Depressed when you admitted that, provided he was the mystical 'B.', you might be induced to take him in. His cough vanished under the magic of your smile like bread and molasses before a ravenous baby."

"Susan!"

"And when he said he 'should like any room in this house,' I came near bursting into tears, so affected was I by the beautiful pastoral simplicity of his nature. There's nothing half so sublime as the study of human nature. Who was it that said, 'The proper study of womankind is man?' I agree with him, whoever he was."

"Susan Brent, will you stop your absurd nonsense!" Mrs. Greenwood said, angrily, yet laughing in spite of herself.

"Eudora Greenwood," returned Sue, solemnly, "that man will marry somebody out of this house before he leaves it. I see it in his languishing look, his insidious smile, his gallant speech, and, more than all, in that terrible band around his hat! How can I help lifting up my voice and crying aloud?"

The clatter of Sphinx's metallic heels on the stairs warned them that Mr. Brasher was returning.

"I'm going to smile on him, the 'lone lorn creeter,'" she added hastily, coming and sitting down deliberately in the rep easy-chair, and spreading out her sea-green flounces, and shaking back her blonde curls, across which the bright March sunshine melted and glowed.

"I am more than pleased with my room—if I may call it mine—and feel that I shall be quite another man from what I have been of late, when once I get settled in such a pleasant home as yours, Mrs. Greenwood," Mr. Brasher said, enthusiastically.

"I certainly hope you will be happy; I like to have all my boarders feel at home," she replied, cordially, but with a little touch of reserve in her manner.

"How large a family have you?" he asked.

"I have fifteen boarders—three ladies, the rest gentlemen. These young ladies are my sisters, Mr. Brasher." She could not avoid saying this, he glanced at them so inquiringly.

Nora, from her seat by the window, lifted a wee brownie face, with soft dark eyes and blood-red lips, and bowed quietly; but Sue rose up and offered her hand.

"I suppose we might as well make friends now as any time, Mr. Brasher, since destiny seems to ordain it," she said, with a radiant smile.

"Do you believe in destiny?" he asked, holding her hand a little closer, perhaps, than there was any absolute need for on such very short acquaintance.

"Well, yes," she replied, thoughtfully, "sometimes I do. If it's anything I desire to take place, you know."

"I hope, then, you will believe in it this time," he said, quickly, in a low tone.

"O, I am quite sure I shall, Mr. Brasher," she returned, in a clear distinct voice. "I think your advertisement stated you were suffering from depressed spirits, did it not?"

"Well—yes, I have been," he said, with considerable hesitation. "But I think I am recovering somewhat. I have had a wearing cough, but I have hope now that I shall soon regain my health and spirits. There come times to us all when we believe the world holds no more happiness for us, but it is an unhealthy, and, I believe, a wrong feeling. No one knows what his own capabilities are, or what greater blessing the future may hold for him than he has yet dreamed of."

"No indeed, Mr. Brasher, that he does not. I have always been devoutly thankful that human hearts were made of gum-elastic instead of porcelain," she replied, with a serenely unconscious air.

He flushed a little, and for an instant looked slightly disconcerted; but the smiling, innocent-looking young face, just a little lifted to his reassured him, and he recovered his composure, and when he took his departure he looked as little like a broken-hearted man as it is possible to imagine. He even hummed a few notes of "The girl I left behind me," in a mild sort of way, as he went down the street, and instead of rejoicing in the cough, which was to be the blessed media by which he was to rejoin his "lost Belinda," he stepped into a drug store and bought half a dozen kinds of cough medicine, with a prodigal recklessness of expense that filled the young man in waiting with astonishment and admiration.

The next night the tea-table at 20, Fletcher Row—that was Mrs. Greenwood's number—had a new face in the circle that surrounded it. This new face was introduced to all the other faces, which, by the way, is about as far as the great majority of acquaintances extend. That clever mask, the human face, hides and covers the real man and woman so completely that not half of even our intimate friends ever see or know us as we are.

To the great amusement of Sue Brent, Mr.

Brasher did not wear his beaver with its sombre trimming, but, instead, sported a natty light-colored felt, with a cream-colored band of satin. There was, too, as that young lady expressed it, "a brightness not of the sun or of the moon, in the supernal polish of his leather and linen."

As it happened, Mr. Thornton did not get in till late that night. As he came in at one door the new accession was just vanishing through another on his way to the parlor. But he had time to see and recognize him.

"Brasher, as I live!" he exclaimed, in astonishment.

"Our new boarder. Do you know him, Mr. Thornton?" asked Mrs. Eudora, in a surprised tone.

"Yes. I did know him in the grub state," he said, with a significant smile. "And that reminds me, I have got a splendid butterfly, a great purple and gold and brown fellow, in some of my pockets, for your collection. By the way," he added, with a quizzical smile, "are you going to add him to your collection?" nodding towards the parlor.

Mrs. Eudora's gray eyes darkened, and her face grew cool. She was that *rara avis*, a widow who resented any joke or intimation on her part for another husband, or, indeed, any intimation of such a thing at all, either with or without effort. Mr. Thornton saw his mistake instantly.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Greenwood," he said, quickly, and with an earnestness of manner very much in contrast with his usual careless indifference. "I trust I shall learn not to wound a delicacy as charming as it is rare, after a time. But do you know this Mr. Brasher?"

"I never saw him till yesterday. Why, isn't he a good man? Shouldn't you advise me to keep him?" she asked, with a deference to the opinion of this comparatively new boarder, which was something quite new under the sun, for Mrs. Eudora was an independent sort of a woman, and usually relied on her own judgment, which was undeniably good—if we except her choice in a husband.

"O, Brasher is a good man—an invaluable man to have in the community," Thornton responded, laughing. "I will leave it to Miss Susie if he is not," he added, as that young lady appeared in the doorway, "trying to learn Sphinx to waltz," she said, in explanation of the queer figure that small damsel made.

"Well, what is it, Mr. Thornton, that you

"will leave to me?" she asked, whirling poor Sphinx round the table in an impromptu waltz, and nearly taking the breath out of that supernaturally sober and proper young handmaiden. "It's not your fate you're going to submit to me—you're not going to propose, Mr. Thornton! Because if you are, I want to be getting ready to faint—that's the proper thing, isn't it?"

"Ask Brasher," he responded, laughing.

"O, but I'm expecting him to ask me!" she cried, gayly.

"And you will not be likely to be disappointed if one may judge by a man's antecedents. I had just made the assertion to Mrs. Greenwood that he was an invaluable man to have in the community, and what I was going to submit to you was, considering the condition of society, is not a marrying man like Brasher, worth three times as much to the State as a bachelor—like myself, for instance? Don't hesitate about answering, out of respect to my feelings," he answered, lightly, "I am not credited with having any—in this matter."

"There, Dora! didn't I tell you so?" Sue cried, triumphantly.

Oddly enough Mrs. Greenwood and Mr. Thornton both colored and looked unaccountably disturbed. Sue noticed it, and maliciously kept silence a moment. But silence wasn't Miss Susie's forte, and could only be kept up by a powerful effort. This she was hardly ever equal to, nor did she prove so now.

"Of course I refer to Mr. Brasher, you know," she explained, benevolently. "Dora was sure he was some nice antique specimen, whose sands of life had nearly run out, and to whom it would be Christian charity to surround with the comfort of a home—where there were young ladies! You know he advertised?"

"No, did he?"

"Yes; and Dora here really snapped me up because I hinted, innocently, that he might be in pursuit of a seventhly or eighthly. Well, right will be vindicated after a time, and truth, though crushed to earth, will rise again. I hope you will make a note of this, my dear Mrs. Greenwood," she added, in a ludicrously solemn tone.

"Sue Brent, you are utterly incorrigible!" laughed her sister.

"And so is Brasher—in his way!" she retorted.

"Susan, I really cannot allow you to speak

in this way," said Mrs. Greenwood, gravely. "It is very bad taste to discuss a person in this manner. Do you know that it pains me to have you do so?"

"Forgive me, Eudora," coming and putting her arms about her neck, and laying her sunny curls against her sister's dark heavy braids, "I'll never mention the depressed again, if you say so. But," with an odd, sideways glance at Thornton, "I do wish I had asked the number of his present ambition."

"Mr. Brasher is in search of number four, just now, Miss Sue," he replied, laughing at the absurd gravity of her tone. "I think I will give my friend Siddons a hint to look out for his laurels."

Sue blushed, then laughed saucily.

"Charity begins at home; keep your hints for your own edification, and not give them where they are not needed."

"Ah! Is he then so sure of you?" he asked, teasingly.

"There's nothing sure on earth, my dear young friend," she replied, with impressive solemnity. "This is a vale of tears, and disappointments hover over our heads like bees over a field of clover! It's an awful thing to think of, my dear young man."

"It would be a proper judgment upon you," he laughed, "if Brasher *should* gobble you up."

"Perhaps; but age always has precedence, and I couldn't be so impolite as to stand in Dora's way," she answered, sweetly. And having brought an annoyed look to both their faces, she retired from the room, singing lightly, half under her breath, "Love not—love not!"

There was quite a party gathered in the parlor that evening. There were Mr. and Mrs. Learnard, Mr. Ralph Siddons from Shirley Street, Mrs. Anderson—Mrs. Learnard's mother, Mr. Brasher, Mrs. Eudora and her two young sisters, and Miss Abigail Spencer, not Abby or Gail, but plain old-fashioned Abigail.

Miss Abigail was a woman without the faintest suspicion of nonsense about her. Possibly there might be more attractive looking women—I don't pretend she was a beauty—but you might search a long way before you would find a more proper or decorous one. No one ever accused Miss Spencer of flirting, O no! She was opposed to it on principle. She was rather opposed to matrimony on the same grounds. It was not known that any presumptuous man had

ever attempted to undermine her principles upon either subject, but then it was generally conceded that it would be a useless undertaking.

Miss Spencer was forty-seven, and always told her age with unhesitating promptness; a noble refutation of the base slanders of certain small-fry lecturers and newspaper paragraphists, who repeat the stale nonsense about a woman's concealing her age, under the weak delusion that they are saying something witty.

Miss Spencer, moreover, *should* have been admired above all other women, by gentlemen, from the fact that she didn't wear flounces and panniers, nor frizzle her hair, nor wear a chignon, nor indulge, in fact, in any of the modern weaknesses of her sex, which are such a sore trial to the eyes of mankind, and which afford such fruitful themes for their superior wisdom to denounce.

But—and I mention it as something difficult to explain—the same gentlemen sought these “flounced and crimped creatures,” paid them the most devoted attentions, complimented them, and married them, in utter disregard of Miss Spencer, who was the living model of the ideal women they professed to believe and delight in. Odd, wasn't it?

But to come back to the parlor of number 20. Mr. Thornton came in a moment, then went out, and up to his room with rather a dissatisfied face. He turned on the gas and sat down and unfolded his paper and made a pretence of reading—indeed, he read some things over three or four times, and was as ignorant of their meaning at the end as at the beginning.

“Confound him! what sent him here, I should like to know!” he exclaimed, irascibly. “There's an end now to my reading in the parlor. He'll be there every evening, and I won't stay and listen to his talk!”

Will Thornton got up and pushed back the table, and strode towards the window, sticking the toe of his boot through the paper, which had fallen to the floor, and tearing it half-way across. He reached down and picked it up, and deliberately tore it quite apart, and threw it behind the table. And all this in utter defiance of the fact that he had had that paper folded very carefully in an inner pocket all day, lest it might get lost or soiled, for there was a letter from Rome, some charming literary notices, and a splendid leader on political economy in it, which

he had kept for his evening reading. It couldn't have been that the habit he had fallen into of late of reading aloud anything that particularly pleased him, had anything to do with his irritable mood, for Mrs. Endora was generally his only appreciative listener, and Will Thornton was a confirmed bachelor of thirty-six, who didn't like women. I am rather at a loss to account for his humor, and so I think was he. He wandered aimlessly about his chamber, looked out a while at the red, blue and green globes in the window opposite, and then undressed and went to bed in a sullen sort of a way, and dreamed that Mr. Brasher was the sultan of Turkey, and had opened a harem at number 20, with Mrs. Endora as favorite wife.

The advent of Mr. Brasher wrought a radical change in the household. Mrs. Greenwood was quieter and more reserved, talked but little, and seemed thoughtful and abstracted. Mr. Thornton was cool and sarcastic, and seldom sat down in the house save at the table. Sue flirted alternately with Mr. Brasher and Ralph Siddons, the latter quite forsaking Shirley Street for Fletcher Row, where, evening after evening, with commendable perseverance, he outsat the irrepressible Brasher.

But the most radical change of all was in Miss Spencer's *coiffure*. One night she came to the tea-table with her front hair in curls, and a voluminous “Nillon” braid at the back. Everybody stared, it was impossible to refrain from it, the change was so great from the “French twist” and the straight fold in front plastered close over the temples and ears, which she had worn from time immemorial. No one suspected Sue, who sat there with such a look of demure surprise on her face, had been mainly instrumental in this transformation, having labored both with tongue and hands to bring it to pass.

Perhaps the change in Miss Spencer's looks—for it did change her astonishingly—struck no one quite so sharply as it did poor Sphinx. She stood bolt upright in one corner of the room, her great eyes fixed and solemn as an owl's, her lips slightly parted, her hands hanging listlessly at her side, and, being partly in shadow, bore a strong resemblance to one of those bronze figures one sees in shop windows. It was very fortunate for Sue's gravity that she did not espy her.

Of course you know Sphinx was not the girl's real name. She had been christened Dorothy Mullen, but Sue Brent declared it

altogether too commonplace a name for such an odd little problem, and so dubbed her "Sphinx." The name suited her so exactly that she was soon known by it altogether. She was dark as an Egyptian, straight, slender, with solemn eyes and an inscrutable face, and though but fifteen, had no more childhood about her than Miss Spencer, herself.

That night, for some reason, Ralph Siddons did not come up to number 20. Sue crocheted a while, and then threw down her work with the declaration that her "head ached ready to split." And thereupon she took her departure. Nora had gone to a concert with Mr. and Mrs. Learnard, and the parlor was quite deserted, only Mr. Brasher and Miss Spencer remaining, beside the mistress of the house. Thornton came in quite early and without looking into the room went up stairs. He did so nearly always of late. By-and-by the clock struck nine. Nine was the orthodox hour with Miss Spencer, and she straightway arose, and bowing rather stiffly, said good-night and went to her chamber.

Now Mr. Stephen Brasher was a man of taste, and though possessed of very accommodating affections, and extremely susceptible to the tender passion, he did not, any more than his brethren, voluntarily choose Miss Abigail's dark swarthy face and forty-seven years, in preference to the pretty widow's roses and bright eyes, and *twenty-seven* years.

Comparisons may be odious, yet nevertheless Mr. Brasher had been making them all the evening, and very much to Mrs. Endora's advantage, in spite of Nillson braid and crimps. I said Mr. Brasher was susceptible. He was also a very prompt man, and he had been making up his mind lately that he wouldn't rejoin Belinda Jane—and the two others—just yet; not if he could help it. He thought it would be so much stronger proof of his appreciation of matrimony in general, and the departed (I don't know as that is grammar, but it's fact,) in particular, if he procured a successor with as little delay as possible. Mr. Brasher was a very conscientious man, and when he thought a thing was right, he was in a great hurry to do it, especially a thing of this particular nature. So, as Miss Spencer took her departure, he proceeded in a very practical manner to make love to Mrs. Endora.

"Sir!" she cried, indignantly, her eyes flashing, as she drew herself haughtily away from the arm he had insidiously slipped first to her chair, and then to her waist.

"Pardon me, but I am so impulsive," said this impressible swain of fifty-two. "I forgot that I had not told you my love; it seems as if all the world must know it, it is such an absorbing thought in my heart. O my beautiful Dora!"

"Silence, Mr. Brasher!" she interrupted, in a low intense tone, rising to her feet, a crimson fire kindling in her cheeks.

"I was going to ask you to marry me. Wont you really be my wife?" he asked, in a tone of meek surprise.

"Your wife!" she cried, scornfully. "Why you are old enough to be my father!"

"Love knows no age, it is immortal—"

"Say no more, if you please," she interrupted, firmly. "If you are to continue here as a boarder *this* thing must never happen again. I shall try to forget it, and I desire you to do the same. Good-night, Mr. Brasher."

He gazed after her as she swept out of the room in a sort of awe and wonder.

"She always was cool, but now she is a perfect iceberg," he said, slowly. "I ought to have known better than to speak to *her*. Susie, now, is much more the sort of a wife I need, and the little witch has shown plain enough that she likes me. I'll ask her the first chance I get. Upon the whole, I don't think I'd like to marry a widow." And straightway Mr. Brasher transferred his affections to Sue, and patiently laid in wait for an opportunity to propose to that young woman. Fortune favors the brave, and within a week the opportunity came.

Coming home early he found Miss Sue alone in the upper hall fastening up an ivy over the window. He took hold and helped her, and when it was completed, managed somehow to get hold of the tips of her little ice-cold fingers. Sue always had cold fingers, and now it was a raw April day, and the hall window was open.

"I hope your heart isn't as cold as your hands, Miss Susie," he said, by way of beginning.

"It's very kind in you to hope so, Mr. Brasher," Sue returned, meekly dropping her eyes.

"I am afraid it's because I am selfish, dear," he replied, with growing warmth. "I want to win it for my own."

"That is rather unreasonable. What, pray, am I to do, Mr. Brasher?" she asked, with a look of innocent perplexity. "I don't really think I could live a week, without a heart."

You know the blood rushes through it—I forget how many times an hour, and—”

“My dear girl, it is your *love*, I want,” he explained, interrupting her. “Since I saw you, my life, which seemed a blank before, has become bright with future possibilities. I never really knew what love meant till I met you, Susan.”

“No? Why, Mr. Brasher, didn’t you love your several wives?” she asked, gravely, opening her blue eyes to their widest extent.

He colored, looked a little disconcerted, then stammered:

“There are—are different feelings, different degrees of—of love.”

“O, but I shouldn’t expect to fare any better than my honored predecessors. I don’t think it would be right to show partiality in a case of this kind. I am a very conscientious person, Mr. Brasher.”

Mr. Brasher wasn’t a fool, and it occurred to him that this very innocent-looking young woman was making sport of him.

“It is nothing to turn into ridicule a man’s honest love,” he said, a little angrily. “If a man ask a girl to marry him—”

“O, to be sure,” she interrupted. “It is a very serious thing, I expect. But you see I knew you were only talking nonsense to me, just as I do to you. I knew if you were in search of a wife, you would sooner take Miss Spencer than a silly little chit of a girl like me, whom every one would take for your daughter. Now, Mr. Brasher, you’ll never tell, if I tell you something, will you?” she asked, putting her hand on his arm, coaxingly.

“No,” he said, a rather dubious expression on his face.

“I don’t suppose I *ought* to tell, but you and I are such friends that I really cannot refrain from telling you. She is so particular—she would be terrible angry.”

“She? Whom do you mean?” he asked, in surprise.

“Miss Spencer. There, it’s out! I don’t know what she would say if she knew it. O! I am real wicked for saying anything.” And Miss Sue covered her face with her hands, and looked the picture of sorrowful regret.

Mr. Brasher began to feel curious. If he *couldn’t* marry neither Dora nor Susie, why, perhaps!

“Well, tell me now, you might as well finish,” he said, persuasively.

“And you’ll never hint I said a word?”

“Never, Miss Susie.”

“Well, you see Miss Spencer is worth—O,

I don’t know how much money, and she always believed anybody would marry her for her money if they married her at all, and so she has kept her affections bottled up, as it were, all these years, never allowing them to gush ever so little. You can judge something about what they must be by this time, and—well, she *likes* you, that is all I shall tell you! Mind, I don’t say she would marry you, but I do think she is just the sort of a woman for a fourth wife,” she said, very soberly.

“But she is so old,” he remonstrated, half pleased and half angry at the girl’s talk.

“Not as old as yourself by five years, Mr. Brasher,” she cried, gayly, and with a bow and a bright little smile she vanished down the stairway.

Mr. Brasher went slowly up to his chamber, his feelings in a decidedly mixed state. He knew Sue Brent had refused his suit as really as Mrs. Greenwood had, but she had done it so differently! He looked in the glass and observed that, with all his care, he couldn’t quite cover the round bald spot just back of the organ of reverence. He noticed, also, that his whiskers were gray close to the skin where the barber had neglected to carefully apply the dye, or where they had grown out since it was applied. He noticed also that there were deep lines about his mouth and eyes, and he concluded, upon the whole, that he wasn’t quite so young as he had felt a little while before.

“She really doesn’t look bad, now she fixes up her hair,” he said to himself, “and then, she has got money!”

Ralph Siddons came that night to take Sue to a lecture. Mr. Brasher was in the parlor, as usual.

“Why don’t you go, too?” Sue asked, in a low tone, and with a glance towards the piazza, where Miss Spencer stood in the pleasant April dusk.

He sprang to his feet and went out, and a moment after Miss Spencer slipped quietly up stairs, while Mr. Brasher brushed his hair in the hall, pulled down his cuffs, and looked to see if his necktie was straight.

“I’ve got them started,” Sue said, laughing, as she took Ralph’s arm on the sidewalk. “I am going to set up match-making.”

“I wish you would make one for me,” he said, meaningly.

“Wait till I get this off my hands. Wouldn’t it be nice if I could marry off Miss Abigail?”

And she laughed gayly.

Then he had to know all about it, and how it came about, which necessitated the revelation of the proposal, and which, curiously enough, ended in another! But with quite another result, as may be gathered from Susie's half-laughing, half-serious declaration, that she "hoped he wouldn't repent his bargain in dust and ashes," but she had an impression he would.

Number 20 underwent another change after this. Mr. Brasher resolutely closed his eyes to the "unattainable," and devoted himself exclusively to Miss Abigail. She was a little shy and embarrassed at first, but gradually she came to bear her new honors very handsomely. She wore the "Nillson braid" all the time, now, and brightened up her dress by such little additions as scarlet bows and Roman scarfs, and she even went so far as to have an overskirt made after the latest fiat of Demorest. Alas for the ideal woman! even she hath fallen. But, there's no denying but she looks better, ninety-nine times.

I am not certain whether love, like cholera and yellow fever, is infectious. I only know that one evening shortly after it had been announced at number 20 that Mr. Brasher and Miss Spencer were engaged, and would be married as soon as the *trousseau* could be got ready, it chanced that Mrs. Eudora and Will Thornton were left alone together. It was something which had not happened since Brasher came into the family, and Mrs.

Eudora was a little distant and cool, though the color came and went in her face every time he spoke to her.

By-and-by he went up stairs and brought down the butterfly he had brought home for her nearly two months before.

"I thought you didn't mean to give it to me," she said, smiling.

"The fact is, Dora—you'll not be angry? I have been wretchedly jealous of that old Brasher! I could have seen him impaled, as this poor fellow was, with infinite satisfaction. I feel like hugging Miss Abigail every time I see her, I am so delighted that *she* is to be number four. I really did think, Dora, it was going to be you."

"Perhaps it might have been," she said, without looking up.

"Ah?"

"If he hadn't been too late," she added, softly, and then blushed scarlet.

"My darling!" And then—well, no matter; this isn't their story.

I have only to add, in connection, that, if nothing happens, Mr. Brasher will become the happy possessor of number four in just one week from to-morrow. The Primrose Eagle man is getting ready to give him a handsome puff in connection with the marriage notice. He thinks he owes something to so good a contributor to that particular column.

IN THE MAELSTROM

BY GEORGE H. COOMER.

WE were twenty-nine days from Charleston, S. C., for Archangel, Russia, in the brig *Annabel Maud*. The passage had been an excellent one, with strong westerly breezes, and we had already reached latitude sixty-one north, longitude fifteen west. Night had become but little more than a name, and the ring of mellow gold left by the setting sun, remained faintly marked till his rising. It was now blowing heavily from the northward; we had just double-reefed the topsails, and were getting the preventer braces on the maintopsail yard, when looking to windward from my position aloft, I caught sight of a dark speck tossed amid the white caps of the sea. It disappeared, and half-blinded by the wind, I imagined it one of the innumerable shapes assumed by the waves as they leaped in sun and shadow. But again it rose to view, and I gazed towards it as steadily as the wind would permit. A second time it sank, reappearing as before.

"On deck!" I sang out. "There is something to windward, sir, that looks like a boat. Right off the beam, sir!"

"How far off?"

"About three miles, I should judge, sir."

The captain brought his glass to bear in the direction indicated.

"Yes, it is a boat with men in her," he said, lowering the instrument, as a huge sea struck the quarter, and a deposit of pure ocean brine ran down from his old sou'wester—"five or six men. Stand by the braces; we must come to, where we are. We might get nearer to her by hauling up sharp, but that won't do. We are dead to leeward now, and she may stand it till she gets down to us. It won't do to draw the poor fellows a single point from their course. Put down your helm, Tom. Let go the lee braces!"

Creak went the weather-brace blocks, and the *Annabel Maud* lay with her maintopsail aback and her foretopmast-staysail slatting free in the wind. All eyes were strained towards the approaching boat. The captain's wife, a young and lovely creature, and her sister, still younger and still more lovely, stood on the quarter deck, anxious and curious.

"O Miranda!" said the young girl, to her wedded sister, "it will never reach us! See how it is tossed! Look, they are trying to free it from water. What a dreadful sea! I can hardly stand on the deck, and only think of those poor men in their little boat. There! O dear!"

At the words, Ophelia Lee's beautiful lips

were wet with the salt spray, and as she staggered at the Annabel Maud's deep lurch, the brine was showering from her cap and shawl. "Too much water hast thou, poor Ophelia!"

Shaking off the unwelcome drops, the brave girl again gave all her attention to the forlorn voyagers in the boat; and the reader may presently learn why I thus speak of her, and why I lost no look or tone of hers.

The little bark was soon so near to us that we could make out the number and condition of her crew. There was a hatless man at the helm in a monkey-jacket; there were three blue-shirted, bare-headed men at the oars, and three others, two in tattered jackets, and one in shirt and trowsers only, were bailing—one with a bucket, another with a tin pan, and the third with an old hat. The sea combed above her sides, often dashing into her and she was nearly swamped. Not more than a hundred yards separated us from the little craft, when an unusually heavy roller came rushing and roaring close astern of her. She disappeared in the intervening chasm, and when she next rose to view it was but to float keel upward, her smooth bottom-boards gleaming like a crow's wing.

For a few moments her crew struggled to climb upon her keel, but successive seas rolled her over and over, till of the seven forlorn men there were but six, then four, then three, then two. She drifted towards us, but we were drifting also, and the wild, howling northwest flays that had now increased in violence, forbade us to lower a boat. Had the little wreck been anywhere but dead in the wind's eye, we could have braced full and run close upon her, but as it was, the distance between us did not seem to lessen; and besides, it was apparent that the course of the boat's drift was tending to carry her clear of us.

There was but one chance of saving the two men and that a small one. We put up the helm, filled away the maintopsail, and in a few minutes, by giving the brig a good pull, ran ahead a quarter of a mile; then hauling on the opposite tack, we succeeded in weathering the boat. One man only, now clung to the keel; the other had fallen backward, and gone down with outstretched arms. As we neared the helpless mariner, the brig was kept so close to the wind that the topsails almost shivered, and this precaution, together with the head sea, so deadened her way that

on coming up with the boat, we had no difficulty in effecting our plan. Lines which led aft outside of the rigging were thrown from the forecastle to the suffering stranger, and before the slack grew taut he succeeded in adjusting one of them around his body. Then we drew him on board; yet careful as we were, the side of the brig bruised him badly, as she slat and wallowed almost upon the boat itself.

"Now put up your helm, Tom!" said the captain. "Slack the lee braces, Mr. Steinway, and let her go off on her course. So—all well your braces! Remember your course there; keep her up no'theast half no'th!"

The rescued sailor, who was scarcely more than a boy, appeared half dead from exhaustion and injuries, and Captain Daun bestowed him in a snug berth, hoping to obtain finally something intelligible from him, for as yet none of us had been able to understand the few words he spoke.

"He is not American," said the captain, "nor English, nor Scotch, nor Irish, nor French, nor Spanish, nor Portuguese, nor Italian; and about his being Ger—"

"O, he ish no German!" interposed Mr. Steinway, who had come from the old Prussian port of Stettin; "he pring no such lingo as dat from Vaterland, German, no! He never vas on der Elbe, no more ash on der Oder! Dat ish so!"

When next day the stranger appeared on deck bright and convalescent, he was the centre of interest. Yet no one could understand a word he said—not Augustine Concha the Spaniard, nor Jean Fouchard the Frenchman, nor Tom Ap-Evarts the Welshman, nor Jack Smith, nor Pat Sheghan.

"Och," said Pat, "poor b'y! not one of the tongues of Babel would hit his case!"

He was about twenty years old, and a finer-looking youth I never saw. He had the blue eyes and fresh complexion of the north of Europe, though exposure had somewhat darkened his features, and his figure was remarkably well-proportioned. Altogether, he gave me the impression that I had seen some one like him before, but whether in a picture or in real life, it would have been hard to tell.

In vain Ophelia Lee tried him with her school map of Europe. His bright intelligent eyes followed her white fingers with almost painful interest as they pointed in succession to the yellow of Russia, the blue of Norway, or the red of Sweden. Poor youth! he evidently knew nothing of maps. Tears of sym-

pathly rose to the fair girl's eyes as she folded the leaves, while the young sea-waif looked in her face with a sad, timid, half-agonized, and yet admiring glance. I was standing at the wheel, close to them, and it occurred to me that between their two bright faces there was a singular resemblance. In expression, in a certain spiritual light, they were as alike as two rays of sunshine. I thought perhaps they were made for each other; perhaps destiny, making instruments of winds and waves, had here on the northern deep cast Ophelia's Hamlet in her path.

I was jealous. I mused on future contingencies. How dreadful, should Ophelia become his tutor! She would teach him of maps and of languages, and I could imagine his wonderful progress. He was very handsome, and he would become still handsomer—for now he was but sunshine among clouds, while she was morning in a clear sky, but his spirit would brighten day by day, and who could predict how the romance of his miraculous deliverance, added to commiseration for his misfortunes, might affect Ophelia's heart? Such were the silly musings of the sailor boy who stood at the wheel of the *Annabel Maud*, and who half forgot his course, till the leach of the maintopsail shivered, and Mr. Steinway sang out:

"Mind your helm dere! You'll have de prig in irons next ding! How you heading?"

I did not tell him that the image of Captain Daun's girl-sister-in-law had come between my eyes and the needle, but simply replied, "No'theast-by-no'th, half-east, sir."

Then I went on dreaming again, but rather of the past than the present. I thought of the days when I sailed little ships in the pond near the schoolhouse—in the pond that the boys used to say, with round eyes and portentous tones, had no bottom; because it lay between four hills, and looked black and sullen, as if at any time a dragon might come up from its depths to look for the first time upon the sun! We don't know what to expect from old earth when we have dwelt upon it only through a child's years; and so the boys thought such a thing might happen—happen close to the schoolhouse.

"Four bells!" And Jack Fouchard came shuffling along to relieve me at the wheel.

"No'theast-by-no'th, half-east," I said, giving Jack the course, and went up to the maintop, where the second mate had a job for me.

But my dream of the past went with me;

and Bob Smith came back; and Dick Shaw; and the old master and his bell; and the little wet feet, cold and uncomfortable, that had been in the pond. And I remembered a little brig, not two feet long, the very model of the *Annabel Maud*, which one day I sent out upon the miniature sea. The boys admired the set of the new sails, and even the girls saw beauty in the jaunty little square-rigger. Perhaps, too, they detected a significance in the name on her delicate blue pennant, for it was "*Ophelia*."

Many trees overshadowed the pond, and one of them, a willow, leaned far out beyond the bank. Ophelia Lee standing on its horizontal trunk and supporting herself by the leafy branches, had ventured some yards from the shore, when my little brig became entangled in the green twigs that swept the water close to the fair girl's feet. Laughingly she shook the tree as if to ripple the water and thus cause the fairy bark to float away. But while running around to the spot, I heard a scream and a splash. Rapid little swells rushed in circles from beneath the tree, and only a white hand and arm above the water told where Ophelia had vanished. Even these instantly disappeared. In diving I missed her; for a large dead branch that reached down beneath the surface caught in my clothes, and I was half drowned before getting free. She rose and again sank, ere I was able to regain my breath and strength; but in a moment more I followed her. I have heard that people sink three times and rise twice in drowning, but Ophelia did not; she went down, down, down, and I followed her as a diver might a lost and sinking pearl. I knew that my hand became entangled in her long locks, knew that I had reached her at last, knew that I was struggling upward, and saw the faint dawn of light that broke deep down in the still waters, and then I became insensible to all things, till I lay upon the green bank and they told me I had saved her. I was then sixteen; she was twelve.

Now in our brig's maintop, with Ophelia Lee beautiful on the deck below, I dreamed of that sweet time—dreamed of the lake by the schoolhouse, and repeated the wondrously delicate lines:

"There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy
stream."

There is a charm in mystery and in things foreign, and Ophelia Lee and her sister Mi-

randa were not the daughters of old Mrs. Lee, the sea captain's widow; she had simply adopted them, naming them respectively for two of Shakspeare's most lovely characters. They had come from over the main, and their nationality was unknown to all even to themselves, for they were taken up in a boat at sea, the one four, the other six years old, as their rescuers judged; and their prattle was in a strange language which none of the weather-worn sailors had ever heard, and which they themselves soon forgot. To my susceptible heart, this portion of Ophelia's story was no trifle; and revolving the many possibilities, I sometimes saw in her the loved one of Hamlet the Dane; and I grew almost a believer in the reincarnation of spirits.

Reflections like these—queer ones for a man putting ratlins on the Annabel Maud's maintopmast shrouds—will account for the pang I felt at the presence of our handsome sea wail, as well as at the pleasure of Ophelia in becoming his preceptress. As I stood there thus, and thought of my pretty brig "Ophelia" on the schoolhouse pond, I almost fancied that we had become Lilliputians and were sailing in the same little vessel, not two feet long; but the thunder of the sea, as the broad topsails tugged at the creaking yards, while the Annabel Maud went pitching down with a swash and a swing, recalled me to real life. I heard the captain remark to Mr. Steinway that the Faroe Islands must bear about sou'-southeast, and that the Icelandic coast lay west-nor-west from us. Between Iceland and the Faroe Islands—how far in the rude North we were!

Days passed, and Ophelia whiled away the hours by essaying the blue-eyed youth with such lessons as struck her girlish fancy; but they were lessons more earnest than systematic. She reminded me of a Gallic sailor who once attempted to instruct me in French, without himself knowing a word of English. Poor Ophelia! she meant all for the best, but my foolish sensitiveness became almost a torture as I noted her pure deep interest in the unfortunate, and felt more and more that an indefinable resemblance existed between them. Besides, had not their fortunes been in one respect marvellously alike? Had not both in the same manner been rescued from death at sea, and must there not be something mournful in the unknown history of each? Often, as she looked upon him, I fancied that her glance seemed to say, "There's

some for you; and here's some for me!"

It was midnight, on the twenty-second or June, when we made North Cape in Norway—midnight, and yet the sun was above the horizon, straight over the pole. It seemed to me as if we had climbed to the top of the world; and I could imagine England, and Holland, and the cold mountains of Scotland, lying far below. Even Sweden had become a southern clime by comparison. And to think of the port whence we sailed—the mart of cotton and rice—in beautiful Carolina! What a pathless waste of cold and savage waves lay between! I talked of these things with Ophelia as she stood at my side while I was capping the ends of the main rigging.

"Yes," she said, "it is larger than the pond by the schoolhouse!" And pearls glittered in her eyes. "How little we dreamed of this when your pretty brig sailed under the willow!" The look and tone were enough. I had nothing to fear from Ophelia's hapless pupil. What if she had guessed those silly thoughts? Lucky that I had not betrayed them! And what shame I felt, to have dreaded a poor young mariner who had no tongue, and was armed only with blue eyes like Ophelia's.

"What progress in the lessons?" I asked.

"O, just a word, one word—that is all! I pronounce 'Russian,' and he smiles and replies 'Ruskoy!'"

"O yes, the masculine of Russian, in their own language is Ruskoy, and the feminine is Ruskaya. But you think he isn't a Russian, I believe."

"O no, he shakes his head when he says 'Ruskoy;' but, dear me, that's as far as we have got! How I pity him—and he is so handsome, too, so fine-looking!"

"Then comes my fit again!" I might have said, like poor Macbeth. Did Ophelia know that she was teasing me? I could feel her stealing a look at my face to see how I bore it. Yet imagination alone was in fault, for the very silliness of my fears was a safeguard against their discovery. I comforted myself with the reflection that at the most they understood but a single word in common, and had no mutual memories of a pond by a schoolhouse, and a treacherous willow, and a dear little boat named "Ophelia!" Herein the advantage was mine, but I required more than this. Yet the feeling was one of uneasiness rather than jealousy, as if the old remembrances might not always remain with her as with me. Then I thought of her as

a little child in a boat, with white dimpled hands, and eyes like the blue sky, and wondered from what sad bark she drifted.

The brig sped on and on, all the circling day that knew no night; and in the brief moments when the captain's fair sister-in-law approached me at my work, or came to lean upon the taffrail while I stood at the wheel, it was a delight to converse with her of the wondrous north—to tell her what she already knew, that the pole star was right up from the royal-mast, only that we could not see it for the midnight sunshine, and that the pole itself was at our feet. The very brig, too, seemed like a conscious being and a friend, and in feeling, rather than words, I caught myself apostrophizing her.

"You and I, old friend, have cast our fortunes together at last. You have lain at the wharf by my home, rusty and weather-stained, or bright and glistening. I played about your spars in childhood, and longed to tread your decks on the sea. It was from you that I fashioned my little 'Ophelia' that sailed on the school lake. And now here we are, I at your wheel, and you with the fresh gale from the north pole piping in your royals!"

And the dear old Annabel Maud lifted her head in answer, as the stern sank and the swell rolled under her forefoot; and the blocks and yards, and the topgallant halyards, and the topsailsheets all gave forth a murmur that I understood right well.

The intelligent countenance of "the stranger youth whom no man knew," soon informed us that he comprehended our whereabouts; North Cape was evidently familiar to him, and I had no doubt that Archangel would be found equally so—for I had long before pronounced him a Russian, in spite of Ophelia's opinion to the contrary. We entered the White Sea and beat up against light southerly winds to the Bay of Archangel. Near the mouth of the Dwina, we dropped anchor to wait for the tide; and here we were visited by a fisherman solitary in a boat. No sooner had he stepped on deck than our young sea waif met him with the most unbounded joy. They embraced each other with such heartfelt affection that Ophelia, who stood wonderingly by, was moved to tears. Vainly both endeavored to explain to Captain Daun the peculiar circumstances of their position; but now, for the first time, in a flow of otherwise unintelligible language from the young sailor, the word "Polska"

struck me forcibly, for I was aware that it meant Poland.

"Ophelia," I said, as she stood at my side, "he is a Pole! But who is the other?"

The little drama ended in our young friend's going away with the fisherman. Before he did so, there were unnumbered consonants used all to no purpose, for ever so much Russian could not enlighten us any; but the shake of the hand, which passed all around, no less than the tear-dimmed eyes, told of gratitude that would long endure. I shame to say it, but I was glad when he dropped Ophelia's hand, he held it so long. But wouldn't I have done so? Wouldn't any one have done so? Whether he would ever present himself again, we knew not; but one thing was certain, he had a tongue among his own people if not among us, and would perhaps fight his way with the best of them.

Archangel lies twenty miles up the Dwina, and when the tide turned at the river's mouth, we went up with a fresh westerly breeze as far as the island of Sollenbole, about a mile from the city, and there discharged our cargo, consisting of rice. It is at this island that all the vessels unload, and thence, when their work is done for the day, the various crews go up to the town.

One less romantic than myself can hardly imagine the sensations with which I met Ophelia in the streets of this far northern seaport, or in my neat sailor jacket and trousers, walked with her on Sundays to visit its chief scenes of interest. At home, I was a neighbor of Captain Daun's; he knew me well, and my position before the mast was in his eyes no objection to my occasionally escorting his beautiful sister-in-law; and as to his wife, she, too, remembered the old days, and the little brig, and the pond, and the willow. We found Archangel very different from what we had supposed it; indeed, to people who had so lately been up in latitude seventy-two, the old Russian town, only sixty-four degrees thirty-two minutes north, seemed well down in the habitable world. If the globe was a ship, the pole might be a truck, North Cape the royal-mast, and Archangel would appear about at the topgallant-mast-head. At this season of the year, it is a stirring mart. Ships were coming and going; new vessels were on the stocks; and the produce of the far north came forth from the warehouses in exchange for the rice of Carolina, the dates of Spain, the gin of Holland and the coffee and sugar of Cuba. We found

that immense tract of country depends on this seaport for its supply of foreign goods.

It was on the day of our arrival in the harbor that we saw the sun set for the first time in a fortnight. It was gone but a few moments behind the cold flat land, then reappeared like a railroad engine running out of a short shallow "cut."

Every day we anticipated a visit from the young Polander, but he came not, neither did his friend.

"It is strange," I remarked to Ophelia, as she stood near me while I was strapping a block, "that 'Kosciusko' does not come to see us." We had named him "Suarroff" at first, when he seemed a Russian, but upon the whole, he appeared more like "Warsaw's last champion," and we rechristened him accordingly.

"I fear he cannot come," she replied. "Perhaps he is really a Pole, as you have thought; and only think of the police, and the military and naval officers that watch every one here."

"But he is only a poor sailor, and I don't know what they can want of him," I said, "unless he belongs to a man-of-war."

"A man-of-war—perhaps he does. I never thought of that; but then his friend the fisherman, what can have become of him?"

"O, we are nothing to him, and he knows, too, that he cannot talk with us."

"And we are nothing to the young man, either; perhaps he will hardly think of us," said Ophelia, in an impatient tone; "yet I cannot believe it, for he seemed very grateful. Poor fellow! he lacks only education. O, I cannot wonder that poets have sung so sweetly of freedom! How little we have valued it, for we never knew its lack. What conception can 'Kosciusko,' as we call him, have of anything like the old schoolhouse at home? There is something in being a New Englander, after all, isn't there?"

"Yes, Ophelia, and let him who thinks otherwise come to Archangel."

Pretty Ophelia! with all her enthusiasm, she was not a New Englander, but a pearl from over sea.

Erelong, we procured a freight for London, consisting of furs, train-oil, tallow, linseed, pitch and tar; then we dropped down the Dwina and came to anchor off its mouth. We had one passenger, a Mr. Harland, merchant of London. As the sun rose from its brief plunge below the waters of the White Sea, and the tide turned in our favor, we got underway. A lofty frigate, lying about two

miles from us, was one of the most noteworthy objects in sight, as gazing from the maintopgallant yard while loosing the sail, I took a last survey of the Bay of Archangel. Just then, a boat was pulled rapidly towards her from the shore, and soon after, the frigate got under sail, heading as if to stand across our bows, but finding this impossible, she fired a gun, the shot from which struck the water and skipped along under our lee. She could not yet harm us, but why was she firing? Of course, Captain Daun would bring to, we thought, but instead of doing so, he ordered us to reef the weather studdingsail gear; and when the old Russian saw those topmast studdingsails go fluttering up, and all hands bowse away at the sheets and tacks, he gave us a second gun. Our course was north-by-west, and the wind west-south-west, giving everything a chance to draw, as we ran down along the land on the east side of Archangel Bay.

What it all meant, I did not know. It is not a sailor's business to wonder at anything that the captain does, much less to ask questions. But it was plain that Mrs. Daun and Ophelia were greatly agitated, and I heard the former ask her husband:

"Does he know that we are pursued?"

Who was "he?" Well, it was not for us to ask. We had only to sway away now and then at a topgallant halyard, as the yard sagged, or give a "small pull" on a studdingsail tack.

After about six hours, with the ship crowding close astern and neither losing nor gaining, we fairly cleared the bay, and felt the swells of the White Sea rolling from southwest to northeast, and as we kept away in the latter direction and squared in the yards, the studdingsails on the other side were roused up to the booms. We had now all sail set, and should the ship beat us, we could no more. In another six hours, we reached the point where the White Sea turns due north. We were now four miles from the frigate. It was plain that our advantage depended on the whole sail breeze, for should the wind increase to a gale, the huge ship of war would probably have the best of the race.

Eleven hours passed, during which we gained six miles, leaving the heavy Russian ten knots astern. The sun, meanwhile, had briefly dipped in the deep, and risen again, and the northern light had shot in red and gold from the horizon to the pole star, from

the pole star to the far-off south, making the night beautiful as day. Indeed, it was night without darkness. We were clear of the White Sea; the Arctic Ocean stretched away before us, and the cold miserable coast of Russia was fading on our quarter. We took in studdingsails and hauled on the wind to the westward, the breeze being west-south-west.

From Captain Daun's apparent anxiety we knew that he had some sufficient reason for wishing to keep out of the Russian's way, and from present indications there remained little doubt that he would be able to do so. The frigate was hull down, her broad foresail looking as if it rose directly out of the water. Still, like the wolves of his own savage clime,

"With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate and hunter's fire,"

the shaggy Russian followed us with a lingering and hungry hope.

Presently, the wind began to haul, first to the northwest, then due north, and finally northeast, piping up till it blew a gale. We saw the frigate's royals come in, then her fore-topgallantsail; her mizzen was of course hidden from us; and now, under single-reefed topsails and main-topgallantsail, she plunged and shundered along. We had already single-reefed our topsails and furled both topgallantsails. For thirty-three hours, sometimes with courses furled and topsails close-reefed, and again with topgallantsails and main royal set, we swept on towards North Cape, a distance of four hundred miles. Close off the cape, it seemed certain that the Russian would overhaul us. For some hours it had blown a strong and steady gale, and he had as steadily gained. Then he loomed up! We could see the reef-points in his topsails. He was but half a mile astern. Suddenly a heavy flaw struck him, and he sprang his foreyard. This obliged him to haul up his foresail and foretopsail. The loss of so much head sail caused him to steer wildly, and he found himself compelled to take in his mizzen topsail and spanker to balance matters. Before his disaster could be repaired, he was nearly out of sight, but the pertinacity of the north was not thus to be overcome, and he chased us away down to the Loffoden Islands, a favorite haunt of the Scandinavian Odin. Here, with fair light breezes, we ran away from all but the dim outline of his topgallantsails.

"And now," said Ophelia, to her married sister, "we are surely out of danger. I should

think *Albert*," meaning Captain Daun, "might venture to tell the crew. They would never betray him, even should the Russian come on board. O, what a beautiful night it will be—day and night blended in one! See, the northern light is already streaming up like fire. And so this is Loffoden; I wonder if we shall see the Maelstrom?"

I was glad when my trick at the wheel came, that I might be near her, she looked so inexpressibly bewitching under the northern light, as she stood on the quarter deck with her gaze turned towards Loffoden. She was evidently dreaming of the old vikings and sea-gods of Norway, and soon her musical notes went floating towards the land:

"Then sing, let us sing,
Of the great sea king,
And ride in the car he rode in;
He sits at the head
Of the mighty dead,
On the red right hand of Odin."

As she ended, I happened to glance towards the companionway, and just then the tall form of an utter stranger rose through it, preceded by Captain Daun, and followed by the London merchant. There were murmurs of surprise forward among the men, and Ophelia, turning to me, said:

"O, I'm so glad he has come at last! You knew nothing of it, of course. The captain thought that if we should be boarded, he would not place the men under the necessity of telling falsehoods—he could risk his own salvation, in such a cause, you know. That gentleman is a Polish exile, and—"

"My men," said the captain, "let me introduce to you Colonel Lodeski, of Warsaw. He has made his escape from the deserts of Siberia, and is going with us to a more comfortable latitude. That's what the fellow up yonder is after us for."

"He has suffered so much!" whispered Ophelia, coming close to me at the wheel. "His wife, whom Mr. Harland happens to know, is a teacher of French in London. She has never been able to learn his exact fate, but since her husband's exile, all their children have died, and she is now alone. He cannot speak English, but the London merchant was instrumental in getting him on board, and acts as his interpreter. Somehow the Russian police must have traced him to the vessel on the very morning of our sailing."

"Squall O!" sang out a man on the fore-

castle, and the warning was enforced by a low roll of thunder to windward. We soon had the sails snug, and the *Annabel Maud* rode out the squall in safety; but a gale of twenty-four hours' duration succeeded it, blowing from the west and driving us close in to the south of Loffoden. Once we saw the frigate. She had carried sail longer than ourselves, and run down while we had been lying to. But now she lay under a close-reefed maintopsail, and was so near us that as the weather momentarily cleared up, we could perceive the sea strike her black bows with vengeance, then shoot foaming to the end of her jibboom as if it recoiled from a rock. Then the storm vapors shut down, and she was again hidden. But at length the sky cleared, the wind sank, and at a distance of four miles our old enemy loomed against the horizon.

The waves now rolled like oil, yet their magnitude no less than the huge masses of foam, where the hurrying swells occasionally curled over and broke, told of the commotion that had so lately been. We were about twelve miles southwest of Moskenaesoe, the southernmost of the Loffoden Islands. Directly north of us, about three miles off, and a little to the eastward of the frigate, the ocean presented a remarkable and terrific appearance; and thence upon the still air came an incessant and startling roar. Our situation at the best was a dangerous one, for the brig sat in the trough of the sea with no wind to steady her, straining mast and hull, and tumbling every one starboard and larboard who did not take good care of himself. But a worse evil seemed impending. We had all heard of the Maelstrom, and now a thrilling fear crept from the main deck to the quarter. Captain Daun went aloft with his glass, and the most of us mounted to the maintopsail yard. Thence, around and around, we could see the vast swells chase each other in broken and ragged cataracts, foaming and leaping on high as if the steeds of the old Norwegian seagods were running mad with rage in this wild amphitheatre.

Ophelia and Mrs. Daun were deadly pale when the captain swung himself out of the rigging and stepped on deck—for the name itself, associated as it was with many an old Norse fable, terrified them.

"Yes," he said, in answer to their looks, "it is the Maelstrom, the real old fellow himself; but the swell is heaving us to the eastward, and will carry us clear of it, I hope.

What we need now is a good lively breeze."

And we needed it sadly, too, as his anxious countenance told. The brig was evidently in a strong current, and unless the force of the sea could throw her far enough to the eastward, she must go into the whirl. Between the current and the swell, she made a northeast drift.

Meanwhile, looking towards the Russian, we saw that he had taken a breeze from the westward, and that his yards were braced sharp in the desperate endeavor to work up against wind and tide and a tremendous head sea. The Maelstrom was to leeward of him, and its grasp upon his long deep keel would defy the tugging of his canvas. He was not more than half our distance from the whirlpool, and his greater depth increased his disadvantage. With him, the current was setting to the southeast, and he had boarded his port tacks, heading northwest with the westerly wind. But every moment, he lost ground, and there was little time to spare if he would save himself. His sole hope now was in getting on the other tack, taking the wind abeam and running to the south. In that manner, he would get rid of the head sea, which of itself was enough to stop his way. So he put down his helm and let go tacks and sheets. But the current was probably strongest at the after part of his keel, and when he had shivered a moment, he fell off again, unable to go around. Yet he must do something. He brailled up his spanker and courses, shifted his helm and wore ship.

This manœuvre carried him almost into the Maelstrom, but it was his only chance. As his broad topsails swelled in the freshening blast, he leaped madly ahead, though at the very verge of the tumbling vortex. But the circling current that for a moment seemed in his favor, was soon against him with all its previous violence, as he struggled to make a direct course southward. Meanwhile, the breeze had reached the *Annabel Maud*, and slowly she was drawing out of the tide, the whirlpool being nearly west from us and to the windward.

An awful terror thrilled every heart on board as we saw the Russian, at last wholly unmanageable, hurled swiftly to the northeast, broadside to the current, and rocking and plunging till his huge black yards dipped deep in the foam. Presently, his masts went overboard. To our surprise, we now saw him carried to the northward, occasionally spinning around, as if passing through a suc-

cession of whirlpools. Again, he took a southward drift, but now it became evident that the principal whirl had lost much of its violence, and we knew that when the tide fell it would entirely disappear. Where we were the current had greatly abated, but it still carried us slowly north, while the frigate was swept more rapidly in the opposite direction, often spinning like a top as the minor pools caught and detained her. On reaching the great Maelstrom which half an hour earlier would have dragged her straight to the bottom, she rushed swiftly around, taking tons of water on deck, and at times almost wholly disappearing.

The whirls, in all directions, now constantly lessened, and when the swift tide that rushes around Lofodden had resumed its regular course, the dismantled frigate rose and sank with the ocean swells that now rolled along unbroken where the Maelstrom had so lately raged. But she was water-logged. The heavy masts, thumping against her in the furious whirls, had so started her fastenings, that now, in plain sight of us, when the appalling danger seemed to have passed, she sank.

We crowded all sail towards the scene, but nothing remained save a shattered boat, bottom up, with two men clinging to the keel. Exhausted and half-drowned, they were taken on board, the younger of them the selfsame northern boy who had once before been hauled up the side of the *Annabel Maud* from a forlorn boat, and the other the rough fisherman who had so rejoicingly met him at Archangel.

Colonel Lodeski exchanged a few words with the elder of the two, and then with great earnestness he grasped the man's hand, as if he had discovered a walf, however rude, from his own Poland. At this moment I was ordered aloft, and the two drenched seamen passed below decks to get rid of their dripping clothes. An hour later, as I was coming down the fore-rigging, *Ophelia* ran towards me.

"O," she exclaimed, as I stepped upon the rail, "you cannot guess whom we have on board, or who I am? I am a Pole from Warsaw! A real Polander! Colonel Lodeski—I cannot realize it, it makes my head run round—Colonel Lodeski is my father! My mother is in London. O dear! I don't know but I'm sorry! An hour ago I was myself, and now I'm a Polish exile! Pulaski Lodeski, whom we called 'Kosciusko,' is my brother! He has exactly such a locket as *Miranda* and

I each have, with a boy and two little girls in it. The old fisherman has been a kind of guardian to him, but neither of them knew anything of my sister and me, except that the fisherman remembered the incident of our drifting away from a wreck on which we all were. It was pitch dark when the sailors put us in the boat, he says, and just then a sea carried it from sight, and we drifted off alone. He and Pulaski were afterwards washed away on a portion of the wreck, and he had always supposed that our mother was lost at the time; but Mr. Harland says that Madame Lodeski, as he has been informed, was taken up in an insane condition, and that for a long time after, she remembered nothing save that once she had two little girls and a boy. Pulaski and his preserver were saved by a Russian ship, and the Pole continued his care for the little boy after they were landed in the czar's dominions. Pulaski, taking to the sea, was at length forced into the Russian navy. Escaping from it, he went on board a Danish vessel bound to Iceland. She foundered at sea, and it was her boat from which we took him up. At Archangel the naval authorities seized him, and suspecting his foster-father Dreski of complicity in his escape, they took him also, putting both on board the frigate. But Pulaski was not condemned to the usual punishment, for he had once in a mutiny at sea saved the life of the commander of this very ship.

"They are conversing now in the cabin. O, you should hear them! Mr. Harland interprets all for us. What would my dear mother say—my mother Lee—if she were living? I'm almost sorry they told me—but I'm *Ophelia Lee*, just the same! Dear, dear! I think I shall not like going to sea! I like schoolhouses, and ponds, and willows, and little miniature ships like—"

"Like the '*Ophelia*,'" I said, softly, "like my dear little brig to which I owe so much!"

"Well, but I love the shore! And now I can teach Pulaski English, and I'll bring out my map again and show him where Russia is, and Poland too!"

"Round in a little on de wedder braces," sang out Mr. Steinway, "de vind ish hauling more nodderly!" And thus our colloquy ended.

Down the coast of Norway stood the *Annabel Maud*, and as day after day *Ophelia*, assisted by Mr. Harland as interpreter, instructed her brother in English, I could read

in his fine eyes a loving anticipation that seemed to say, "A ministering angel shall my sister be!"

We arrived at London, where Madame Lodeski was soon informed of the great happiness in store for her, and she fainted from bewildered joy on once more embracing her children. With her, Ophelia could converse without difficulty, for she spoke English. And now our happiness seemed complete. Shortly we sailed for Boston, young Pulaski all the while making wonderful improvement in his lessons; Colonel and Madame Lodeski looking forward to happier days in the Western Republic; even old Dreski catching now and then an English word; and Ophelia and myself living in a dream.

There was something more than the red, and white, and blue, in the beautiful flag, that with its stripes and stars, and field of azure, streamed from the Annabel Maud's trysail peak, as with her royals furled, her mainsail

hauled up, and her foresail just rising in the clewlines, she stood in by Castle Island. In that flag, as in the haven before us, there was protection and hope!

Colonel Lodeski soon found employment which placed him above want, as did also, though in a more humble sphere, the old fisherman Dreski. Young Pulaski Lodeski continued a most assiduous student, and Ophelia soon had reason to look with pride upon the intellectual growth of one as noble in spirit as he was handsome in person. But

"I loved Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum!"

And, to end a long story, she is now my own. Colonel Lodeski is still living, but Ophelia's brother fell at the side of Bem, in the great Hungarian war, and the Pole and the Magyar are among his mourners.

